

THE SECRET OF ROMANS 7

Message 3

Words: 5392

INTRO: We are in the process of preparing to look at Romans 7. We have briefly covered chapters 1-3 and the message is this: All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Every person has sinned, and that sin condemns them to a life in bondage to sin and to hell.

But God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. So God paid a price sufficient for every person ever to come into existence to be saved. And how will God do that? Well, first, the sins every person has committed have to be taken care of. That is what justification is all about and that is what chapters 4-6 are about.

When a sinner repents of his or her sins and they put their faith in Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross, they are justified before God. They are declared to be righteous. This justification did not happen on the ground that God made them righteous, but because God declared them righteous. He could declare them righteous because Jesus Christ had taken their place in death. His death satisfied the law that said the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

So in the last message we looked at how this justification takes place and that it is by grace through faith and not by works. This is a most important doctrine. Then we looked at the believer's standing before God, which is now declared to be righteous; and we looked at the believer's actual state, and we saw that there is still a sin problem.

And we saw further that God wants to deliver us from sin, one sin at a time. And throughout life we meet new things that give us trouble, and in each of those new things God wants us to learn to overcome sin by grace through faith.

B. Romans 4-6

We left off in Romans 6 and we'll begin by reading verses 1-9 once more:

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

The believer's standing in Christ is indicated by the believer's co-crucifixion with Christ, his burial with Christ and that he has also been raised with Christ. So since the believer has been raised with Christ, verse 5 says he shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. God now wants the believer to live like Christ, since he has been raised with Him.

Now note verse 6. The old man, that is man under the dominion of the flesh, was crucified with Christ. This is an indicative statement of fact. When I repent of my sins and place my faith for salvation in Jesus Christ, His death for me is put into effect. His death

for me does not take effect until I repent of my sins and place my trust in Him. But when I do that, His death counts for me. It is as when I have a debt that I do not have the means of paying, and another pays for me. The fact is it is paid. Another fact is that I did not pay for it.

These facts give me a position in Christ. It is not that I have not sinned. It is that my sins have been removed and now I stand complete in Him. Now we go to verse 6 once more. Our old man, the person I was before I got saved, was crucified with Christ, but there was a purpose for that. It is that the body of sin might be done away with. It was so that I should no longer be a slave to sin. Now these are not facts. The verb mood is subjunctive. It means this is now possible.

So here is the picture. In my standing or my position in Christ, I am saved from sin. But in my life I still sin. And since I am saved by grace, does it then not matter that I continue to sin? Of course it matters! So my past sins are taken care of, but now in the rest of my life I need to learn to overcome sin in its every form.

After justification, the process of sanctification begins. So let me now show one of the first very important things to know with regard to sanctification. Look now at Romans 6:10-11:

10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

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

Consider now the word *reckon*. It is the word, *logizomai*. Now a key idea of this word is calculation or reasoning or logic. Somewhere I have read this is an accountant's term. Paul said in verse 6 that we know that our old man was crucified with Christ. That

is an indicative statement of fact. So Paul is now saying that from what he has said we can do the math. Logically, if we died with Christ, then we are dead to sin. This is our position in Christ.

Then if we do the math, if we were raised with Christ, then we are alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Summarizing some of Maxwell's questions and answers let me put it like this: The command here is not to become dead to sin. It is not to make ourselves dead to sin. We are not commanded to imagine ourselves to be dead to sin. Reckoning does not have to do with feelings, it has to do with facts. We are to reckon it to be so. This is our position in Christ. But it is possible to be in Christ, dead to sin, while in experience sadly alive to sin and be only partly devoted to Christ. Reckoning is an act of faith.

And here is how Maxwell puts it: "We are to keep on reckoning till God makes real in experience." Now let me show this in chart form.

CHART on reckoning.

We have seen some of that in the teaching on the believer's standing and his state. And in the process of sanctification and the progress of salvation towards glorification, the believer must go through the wilderness. And that is Romans 7, and understanding Romans 7 is our goal.

CHART: Last chart on the progress of sanctification and salvation.

We are at justification, pictured by Israel having come across the Red Sea. Here they sang the victory song. But now, between them and Canaan, the land picturing the Christian's rest in faith, lies the wilderness. This is described in the Christian's life in Romans 7. The process of sanctification begins right here.

And before that is possible, I must go through the wilderness. I must go through Romans 7 before I can enter Romans 8. Israel had to pass through the wilderness to get into Canaan.

Go to Exodus 14. Israel has just left Egypt. They are camped before the Red Sea. They are hemmed in on every side. They cannot go left, they cannot go right. They cannot go back; Pharaoh is there with his army. And they cannot go forward. The Red Sea is in their way.

So look at verse 10:

10 And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.

11 Then they said to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?"

12 "Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?' For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness."

13 And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever."

14 "The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace."

A sinner does not come to salvation until he is hemmed in on every side. A sinner must come to the end of himself before he is willing to turn to Christ. It is when one turns to Christ no matter what others think or no matter how impossible it all seems that God comes through to deliver one.

Verse 15:

15 *And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward.*

16 *"But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.*

17 *"And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen.*

18 *"Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."*

19 *And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them.*

20 *So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness to the one, and it gave light by night to the other, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.*

21 *Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided.*

22 *So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.*

23 *And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.*

24 *Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians.*

25 And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

26 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen."

27 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

28 Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, and all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.

29 But the children of Israel had walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

30 So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

The very way God used to deliver Israel, He used to defeat Egypt. Israel came up out of the water 3 days and three nights after they left Egypt. They came up out of their watery grave at the same time Jesus came out of the grave.

So Romans 6 says this:

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,*

6 *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

7 *For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

Israel was freed from the tyranny of Egypt when Israel came out of the Red Sea, and the waters closed up over Pharaoh and his army. The sinner is justified and delivered from the tyranny of sin when is raised with Christ

Verse 31:

31 *Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.*

When a sinner is justified, it is a joyous time. My mind goes back to the very first meetings of the Sutera Twins I went to. The meetings took place in Prince George, B.C. There was a young man who had been involved in about every kind of sin and he came under conviction in those meetings. He could not bow his knees but he could not stay away either. And then one night he broke, and oh what joy radiated from his face.

I remember when he went forward to share and one of the evangelists was at his side. And this young man said, "Oh, I'm so glad it's all over!" And the evangelist said something like, "Young man, it has just begun!"

Look at Exodus 15:1:

1 *Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying: "I will sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!*

2 The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

3 The LORD is a man of war; The LORD is His name.

4 Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

5 The depths have covered them; They sank to the bottom like a stone.

6 "Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.

7 And in the greatness of Your excellence You have overthrown those who rose against You; You sent forth Your wrath; It consumed them like stubble.

8 And with the blast of Your nostrils The waters were gathered together; The floods stood upright like a heap; The depths congealed in the heart of the sea.

9 The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be satisfied on them. I will draw my sword, My hand shall destroy them.'

10 You blew with Your wind, The sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

11 "Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?

12 You stretched out Your right hand; The earth swallowed them.

13 You in Your mercy have led forth The people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength To Your holy habitation.

14 *"The people will hear and be afraid; Sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia.*

Do you know what happens in the world when true repentance and salvation takes place? When a revival happens, the people of the world start to tremble. When the people of Canaan heard what had happened here, they became afraid. Later, when Moses sent out the 10 spies and Rahab hid the spies when they were in here house in Jericho here is what Rahab said:

9 *"I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.*

10 *"For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.*

11 *"And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain any more courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.*

Why is there no fear of God in so many Americans? Because God is not able to do great things among Christians. When revival comes to a community, many of the lost get saved. A new fear of God sets in. And there is always great joy among God's people. But after a revival like after salvation, it is only the beginning. It has just begun. Now the process of taking Egypt out of Israel begins. Now the process of delivering the Christian from the power of the flesh begins.

So look now at Romans 6:10-11 again:

10 *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.*

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

We reckon, we count on the fact that Christ took our place in death and He died to sin once for all. But He was raised and He now lives to God. So verse 12 and on:

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

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.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

When it says sin shall not have dominion over us, that means sin shall not lord it over us. When sin reigns or lord's it over a person, when the wrongful desires (lusts of verse 12) call a person cannot overcome those desires. Now why shall sin not have lordship over us? Because we are not under law but under grace.

So what does it mean to not be under law? One who is under law is condemned when they break that law. But Christ bore our condemnation. What does it mean to be under grace? Well, look at verse 15 at what it does not mean:

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

The answer, "Certainly not! Means, "May it never be!" Under grace we find free forgiveness for sin. Under grace we are freely given power or incentive over sin. Paul then explains:

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves

whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

From a slave to sin, to a slave to righteousness! How so? Because we have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which we were delivered. Obedience from the heart is obedience from the mind. The mind is the battle ground. It is here, through the teaching, the doctrine of salvation in Christ that we gain overcoming power.

19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sin earns wages. The wages are death. But the gift of God is eternal life. The word 'gift' here is *charisma*. It is that which is freely bestowed. The root word is 'grace.'

So before we go to Romans 7, I want to go over a chart to demonstrate the process of sanctification.

CHART on sanctification: