

“God’s Work in Salvation”
Romans 7:1-4
(Preached at Trinity, October 12, 2008)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As I said last time, **Chapter 7** is a continuation of the previous chapter. In **Verse 14** of **Chapter 6** Paul makes the bold statement, **Romans 6:14** – “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”
 - A. As we looked at this verse we saw that Paul was in no way abrogating the Law but rather stating that in terms of our relationship to the Law things have forever changed.
 - B. The Law was weak in that it provided no change in the heart. It made demands that we could not fulfill. The Law offered us no means of righteousness to justification. It has no power to subdue sin. In fact, due to the sinfulness of our hearts, the Law only served to enliven sin within us.
Robert Haldane: “All of the light and all of the authority of the Law, so far from being sufficient to subdue sin, on the contrary, only tend, by the strictness of its precepts and the awful nature of its sanctions, the more to excite and bring into action the corruptions of the human heart.”
 - C. Under grace we do not look to the Law as a means to justification. We also do not look to the Law as the means to sanctification. Only grace can make us right before God.
2. Someone might respond to Paul’s teaching, “If we are not under the Law, then we must conclude that it really doesn’t matter how we live.” Paul’s answer: **Romans 6:15** – “What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.”
He then spends the remainder of **Chapter 6** expounding on this statement. Why doesn’t freedom from the Law result in more sin? Because God has freed us from slavery to sin.
3. As **Chapter 7** opens Paul is still maintaining a focus on the place of the Law.
 - A. Paul opens with an illustration: A wife is bound to her husband as long as he is alive but when the husband dies the wife is no longer bound to him and is free to marry another. Paul is using this to illustrate that Christian has died to the Law and is now bound to Christ.
 - B. Paul’s point in **Verses 1-4** is that the Christian has died to the Law. You must die to the one before you are free to marry another.
4. Paul affirms the meaning of his illustration **Verse 4**
Romans 7:4 – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

5. We have died to the Law in order that we might be married to another - that we might be united to Christ in an intimate relationship.
This verse describes something else. It describes God's sovereign work and purpose in our salvation. This morning I want to examine this verse as we consider God's great work in our salvation.

I. Our death to the Law was a sovereign work of God

A. We have been made dead to the Law

1. Paul is continuing to expound on the death/life theme he began in the previous chapter.
Romans 6:3-4 – “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: 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.”
2. Christianity is nothing less than death and a new life.
The question is how did this occur? How is it that we have died to the Law; died to sin, died to our old life?
3. This verse describes it perfectly. We were put to death
4. The Greek word **θανατόω** is in the passive voice – the action is placed upon the subject. In other words, we have been put to death
5. Many of our English translations do not reflect this
The KJV does not – “ye also are become dead to the law”
The ESV does not – “you also have died to the law”
The NIV does not – “you also died to the law”
The CSB does – “you also were put to death”
The NAS does – “you also were made to die to the Law”
6. Our death to the Law was not something we did. This is God's sovereign work. This is grace.
Romans 5:20 – “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:”
7. In salvation the old man is killed – put to death by the power of regeneration. This is all God's doing.
Galatians 2:19-20 – “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. ²⁰ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

B. God planned our salvation and He is executing His plan

1. It was God who chose us and determined to save us
2 Thessalonians 2:13 – “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:”

Ephesians 1:3-4 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: ⁴ According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”

2. It was God who chose to send His Son to redeem His people
2 Timothy 1:9-10 – “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, ¹⁰ But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:”
3. Jesus came to actually accomplish God’s eternal plan
Matthew 1:21 – “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”
 (it doesn’t say that He came to make salvation possible)
John 6:39 – “And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”
 (As the great Prophet, Priest, and King He is accomplishing the salvation of His people.)
3. It was God who sent forth His Holy Spirit to apply the atoning death of Christ to His people drawing them effectually through the Gospel. The Holy Spirit brings about our death and new birth whereby we died and were raised again effectually. It is through Him that we have died to the Law and died to our old life of sin.

- II. Paul says that this took place through the body of Christ – through His death
Romans 7:4 – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ”
- A. This speaks of our union with Christ which Paul dealt with in **Chapter 6**
 1. We are alive because of Christ. Christianity IS Christ. It’s about what He did. If your hope of eternity does not rest in Christ what you have is not Christianity.
 2. We died with Christ
Romans 6:3 – “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”
 3. We were also raised with Christ.
Romans 6:4-5 – “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection:”
 4. The death of Christ was effectual in delivering us from our sins. His death provided atonement through which we are pardoned and justified. His death also provided deliverance from our sin – we died with Him.
 - B. We have died to all that pertains to our old life in the flesh – a sovereign work of God – we have been put to death.

1. Paul said in **Chapter 6** that we have died to sin
Romans 6:6 – “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”
2. Now he adds that we have died to the Law
Romans 7:4 – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law. . .”
3. This all takes place because of our union with Christ and it is all by the sovereign power of God.
4. We are now married to Christ. (more next week)
Romans 7:4 – “. . .”that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead”
5. If what you have has not resulted in you falling in love with Christ it isn't Christianity.

III. What is the end and purpose of this supernatural work of God?

- A. The ultimate end is His glory
Romans 11:36 – “For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.”
Ephesians 1:4-6 – “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: ⁵ Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”
- B. What is God's purpose in our salvation? What is He accomplishing? The end of our salvation is reconciliation. God is restoring His people unto holiness.
Ephesians 1:4 – “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”
 1. God has purposed that all of His people bear the fruit of holiness
Romans 7:4 – “. . . that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”
 2. This is what distinguishes us
 - a. In the Parable of the Sower Jesus described the nature of true conversion.
Matthew 13:23 – “But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”
 - b. Again, in condemning the false prophets Jesus described the nature of His true people
Matthew 7:16-20 – “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. ²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

- C. This is the result of our death
1. We have died to sin - This is the result of God's supernatural work in us
Romans 6:6 – “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”
 2. We have also died to the Law. It is no longer our master
 1. Sin can no longer condemn us. We have died to its condemnation.
 2. We have died to its rigor – it no longer binds us.
We now love the Law and love to obey the Law because we love to please our new marriage partner.
 3. This results in the fruit of holiness
- D. Fruitfulness is the result of our marriage to Christ.
1. One of the aspects of marriage is bearing children – “Be ye fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.”
 2. One of the aspects of our marriage to Christ is that we bear fruit
 - a. If you are not united to Christ you cannot bear fruit
 - b. One of the great ends of marriage to Christ is that we bring forth fruit.
John 15:4-8 – “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. ⁶ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. ⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”
 3. Freedom from sin into a life of fruit-bearing for God does not come through the Law. It can only come through grace
 - a. We could not bear fruit under the Law. We couldn't keep it. Our works were rejected by God. We had to die to the Law. Our old relationship had to end.
 - b. Freedom from sin can only come by dying to the law and its partner sin, so that you can be united to another.

Conclusion:

1. As I stated back in **Chapter 5**, **Chapters 6-7** are nothing more than an extended commentary of **Romans 5:20-21**
Romans 5:21 – “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”
 1. This importance of this righteousness was the focus of Paul’s teaching throughout **Chapter 6**.
Romans 6:4 – “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: 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.”
Romans 6:12-13 – “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. ¹³ Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”
Romans 6:17-18 – “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. ¹⁸ Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
Romans 6:22 – “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”
 2. This is Paul’s teaching here: The Christian has been put to death to the Law and all that pertained to the old life that he might have a new Master and a new life
Romans 7:4 – “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”
 2. Is the fruit of righteousness being evidenced in your life?
 This is God’s purpose in your salvation.