

**Intro:**

XXIII. Sin and the Law

A. The Purpose of the Law - It Reveals Sin - vs 7

1. The next question
  - a. What shall we say then? Is the law sin?
  - b. Is the Law the problem?
2. Certainly not!
  - a. strongest Greek negative - *me genoito*
  - b. used in 3:4,6,31; 6:2,15; 7:13
3. The Truth found in the Opposite
  - a. On the contrary
  - b. the imperfect revealed by the perfect - I would not have known sin except through the law.
    - i. already revealed several times - 3:20; 4:15; 5:13
    - ii. even Gentiles have the Law written in their hearts - 2:15
  - c. Paul begins Using “I” and “me” indicating personal testimony
    - i. how the Holy Spirit used the law in his own life leading up to his Damascus road experience and the three days afterward - Ac 9:1-18
    - ii. in his testimony to king Agrippa, he says he was “kicking against the goads” - Ac 26:14
    - iii. As a Pharisee, Paul
      - studied under Gamaliel
      - had tried to follow the law meticulously
      - considered himself zealous for God - Ac 22:3; Ga 1:13-14; Phil 3:5-6
      - Zealous Jews had modified and externalized the Law
    - iv. during his pre-salvation conviction, Paul started to understand that the demands of the law were internal and that he failed miserably
  - c. For I would not have known - Ro 3:20
    - i. covetousness - *epithumia* - a longing (especially for what is forbidden):--concupiscence, desire, lust (after).
      - Christians shouldn't live according to the lusts of their old self - Ro 13:14; Gal 5:16,24; Eph 4:22; Col 3:5; 1 Th 4:5; 2 Ti 2:22; Jas 1:14-15; 1 Pe 1:14; 2:11; 4:2; 2 Pe 1:4; 1 Jo 2:16-17
      - Unbelievers have no other choice - Eph 2:3; 2 Ti 3:6; 4:3; Tit 2:12; Tit 3:3; 1 Pe 4:3; 2 Pe 2:10,18; 3:3; Jd 16,18
    - ii. unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." - Ex 20:17; De 5:21

B. The Work of the Law - It Arouses Sin - vs 8

1. But sin,
  - a. that which is already in a person's heart
  - b. taking opportunity by the commandment,
    - i. *aphorme* - a starting-point for an expedition, an opportunity:--occasion.
    - ii. Sin uses the commandment as a starting point
    - iii. The natural rebellion of the unregenerate nature picks up from there - Ro 8:7
  - b. produced in me all manner of evil desire. - Ro 5:20
2. For apart from the law sin was dead. - Ro 4:15; 1Co 15:56

a. not that sin doesn't exist apart from the law - Ro 5:12-13

b. lies dormant, not fully active

C. The Result of the Law - It Ruins Sinners - vs 9-11

1. Telling of his perspective before salvation

a. I was alive once without the law

i. as a Pharisee, he was an expert in the law and believed that he was blameless in regard to it - Phil 3:6

ii. He had served through self effort "the oldness of the letter" - Ro 7:6

b. but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

i. when a true understanding of the internal requirements of the law came

ii. He began to see himself as having come short of the law's righteous standard

- sin revived - he came to realize his true condition

- I died - he came to realize his true spiritual state - Eph 2:1; Phil 3:7-8

c. And the commandment, - representing God's law

i. which was to bring life, - Le 18:5; Eze 20:11,13,21

- if you broke the law, you would suffer the consequences

- if you followed the law, you would live in the blessings of God

ii. I found to bring death

- he realized his complete inability to truly do according to the laws internal intentions

- he stands under the sentence of death

2. As believers

a. we are given eternal life

b. b/c the requirements of the law are fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit - 8:4

c. the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness-8:10

3. For sin,

a. taking occasion by the commandment, - vs 8

b. deceived me - Jas 1:14

i. deceit is sin's most subtle and disastrous evils

ii. people are deceived in thinking they are acceptable to God b/c of their good works and see no need for salvation

iii. so many false religions - self effort, trust, and righteousness

c. and by it killed me. - vs 9-10

D. The Bi-Product of the Law - It Reflects the Sinfulness of Sin - vs 12-13

1. Therefore - answering the question of vs 7 - "is the law sin?"

a. the law is holy - Ps 19:8; 119:137

b. the commandment holy and just and good. - 1Ti 1:8

2. Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not!

a. The Law was not the problem, but it did point out what was the real problem

b. But sin,

i. that it might appear sin,

ii. was producing death in me through what is good,

c. so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

i. the ultimate purpose of the law is to drive men to faith in Christ - Ga 3:19-22

ii. Robert Murray McCheyne - Jehovah Tsidkenu - The Lord our Righteousness