

The Law In Romans

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Preacher: Chris Trousdale

- [0 : 00] I want you guys to take your copy of the scriptures and open up to the book of Romans.
- For those of you who have not been with us, we have now been in Romans for a year. We started the first week of June last year, and we have made it up through chapter 7.
- We finished chapter 7 last week, and so we are almost halfway through the book of Romans, which is not too bad. We're tracking fairly well with how quickly I want us to get through Romans, so it'll probably take us about two years to get through this whole book, maybe a little bit more.
- But this morning, we're going to do something a little bit differently. We're going to spend this morning looking back over much of what we have covered over the last year, but especially focusing on what we have been talking about for the last month, and that is the law of God.
- But more specifically, I want us to understand what the Apostle Paul teaches us, not just in chapter 7, which we have seen over the last month, has a lot to say about the law, but what Paul says throughout primarily the first few chapters of Romans, but we'll jump ahead a little bit here and there.
- [1 : 19] But I want us to see what Paul has to say about the law, because if we can understand, if we can get a good handle on what Paul has to say about the law in this book, then we will have a good handle on what Paul says in this book in its totality.
- In fact, the word law occurs 74 times in the book of Romans, and 63 of those are in the first seven chapters. So we've had to deal with the law a lot. And so this morning, we're going to come back to dealing with the law one more time in these first seven chapters before we move on.
- And so I want us this morning to do something that's a little bit unusual. We're going to sort of do an overview of these seven chapters and see what Paul has to say about the issue of the law of God in the midst of these seven chapters.
- And I'm going to break a lot of preacher rules this morning. You're not supposed to make more than about four or five points in a sermon. I've got 14 for you, so get ready to write. I told Nate this morning, I was looking over my sermon this morning at home, and he came in there and I said, well, I've got 14 points this morning.
- And he looked at me and he said, how long is that going to take? Because last week was pretty long, and I didn't have 14 points last week. It'll take about the normal amount of time, I think.
- [2 : 34] We'll find out. But since we're in the first seven chapters and sort of doing an overview, we're going to jump in and read from chapter 3 this morning, right in the middle of these seven chapters. And we're going to begin in verse 19, read all the way down to the end of chapter 3.
- And I want to ask you guys to stand in honor of God's word as we read together. Romans chapter 3, beginning in verse 19, Paul says, Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

For by the works of the law, no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law.

Although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there's no distinction for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith.

This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

[4 : 00] Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means. On the contrary, we uphold the law. Father, we ask this morning that you would give us great insight into your word.

That just as you, through your spirit, inspired Moses to write the law, and through the same spirit inspired Paul to interpret the law and help us to come to grips with the law in this book, we pray that that same spirit would open our eyes this morning so that we might behold wonderful things in your word.

Teach us and instruct us, we ask this morning. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You guys take a seat. We use the term biblical theology in a couple of different ways.

[5 : 28] If you guys are the type of people who like to read theology books, and some of you are, and some of you aren't, we've got a few books of theology on the back table along with some other books that dabble in theology but aren't quite as heavy.

You can grab some of those if you want to later on. But if you do read much in theology, then you'll find pretty quickly that people who write about theology use the term biblical theology in a couple of different ways.

Of course, biblical is just an adjective, and so many times it's used in exactly the way that you would think. If somebody says that their theology is biblical, they mean that what they believe about God is in accordance with what God has revealed about Himself in the Bible, and therefore it's biblical, it's right, it's true.

But sometimes theologians will use the phrase biblical theology in another way. Sometimes they will use it to describe a theology that is drawn from the entire Bible.

So that you might do a small study. You might study, for instance, what one writer has to say about one particular issue, and you wouldn't want to call that a whole Bible theology of that issue.

[6 : 38] You wouldn't call it a biblical theology of that particular issue. But if you were going to look at what the whole Bible says, then you would be doing biblical theology.

And oftentimes, biblical theology will try to sum up the entire message of the whole Bible. So I've got a shelf of books in my office, and all those books have biblical theology somewhere in the title, and most of them run from Genesis all the way to Revelation, trying to summarize the Bible's teachings for us.

But the good news for us is that the Apostle Paul did that kind of biblical theology for us. Now, of course, for Paul, the entire Bible at his time was just what we call the Old Testament.

He's in the process of writing part of the New Testament. The other apostles are in the process of writing other parts of the New Testament. So for Paul, the Bible would have included everything that we call the Old Testament.

And in the book of Romans, Paul is doing biblical theology for us, both in the sense of making sure that everything he says aligns with the Old Testament, so he quotes the Old Testament over and over throughout the book of Romans, but also in the sense that he is trying to help us to understand God's way of saving people and God's way of sanctifying people as it's described from Genesis all the way to the end of the Old Testament.

[7 : 58] So Paul's doing biblical theology in both senses of the term. And one of the ways that he does that is by consistently taking us back to what is called the Torah, or the law of God.

And so this morning we're going to look through these first seven chapters of Romans and try to gain some perspective and do a bit of biblical theology of the law from the book of Romans, because I think if we do this, it'll serve as a good overview of almost everything that we've seen throughout Romans.

Not in all the detail, you'd have to go back and listen to all the sermons, but in the big scheme we'll get a picture of what Paul has been teaching us throughout these first seven chapters. And so it's going to be really simple this morning.

I'm just going to make 14 points to you about the law. That's it, 14 points. Some of them are really simple, and I don't even really need to elaborate on them very much, but I'll point you to a place in Romans for each point so that you can see it coming from the Apostle Paul and not merely coming from me.

So that first of all, the simplest thing that we can say that Paul says about the law is that the law is the law of God. It was, after all, God who thundered on the mountain when He spoke to Moses and revealed the law to Moses.

[9 : 15] It was actually God Himself who inscribed the Ten Commandments on those first two stone tablets that Moses then decided to break as he got angry down at the bottom of the mountain.

It was God speaking to Moses. It was God that Moses conversed with face to face, we are told, in the Old Testament. And so the law that Paul speaks of so frequently throughout the book of Romans is the law of God.

And that may seem like a simple point, but it's a point that we need to mark down, that we need to remember. When we're talking about the law, yes, we're talking about the law of Moses. Yes, we're talking about the things that Moses himself wrote down.

But first and foremost, we're talking about the law that is God's law and therefore God's word. Take a look in Romans chapter 7 where we've been quite a bit lately.

We will actually be looking at a number of verses from Romans chapter 7 this morning so you can sort of keep your finger there and then we'll turn elsewhere throughout the book of Romans. But Paul tells us very clearly in verse 22 of Romans chapter 7, he says that, I delight in the law of God in my inner being.

[10 : 22] What law is it? It's the law of God in which he delights. Or in verse 25, he says again, I myself serve the law of God with my mind. So Paul is thinking of God's law when he talks about the law throughout the book of Romans.

And because God is thinking of God's law, the second point that we want to make about this law is that it is a good law. Paul tells us that the law of God is good.

Just look up a few verses in chapter 7 to verse 12 where Paul tells us, so the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

He could not be any more clear than that. Whatever else we might learn about the law from Romans and some of it is quite difficult to wrap your mind around. Some of it sounds very negative on the surface but what we must remember is that the law is good.

This is why David in Psalm 119 over and over sings about his love for God's law, about his delight in God's law because the law is in fact, in and of itself, it is good.

[11 : 26] He says again down in verse 14, we know that the law is spiritual. So the law is God's law and the law is a good law that we have from God.

And this good law that we have from God, third point, Paul tells us if you turn back to Romans chapter 2, Paul tells us that this law is actually, the work of this law is inscribed upon every person's heart.

The work of the law is written on everyone's heart. And so we can look around the world, we can see in various cultures around us that there are basic moral principles that are accepted everywhere around the world.

So everyone accepts the basic fact that you should not murder people and that you should not steal and you should not lie. Now, we are all sinful people and so we are given to ignoring that sense of what's right and wrong.

We are given to twisting it and trying to justify our own actions so that when we in fact do lie or when we in fact do hurt other people, we try to convince ourselves and others that we've not actually broken the law.

[12 : 30] But nevertheless, we see all the time, despite the evil in the world around us, despite the fallenness of every culture in the world, we see in every culture the work of the law written upon people's hearts.

We sometimes refer to this as our conscience. Well, even non-Christians we know have a conscience. They're bothered at times when they lie. They don't want to be a murderer. They don't want to be known as a thief.

And that's because of the work of God's law written and inscribed on people's hearts. And Paul speaks of that in Romans chapter 2. Move down to verse 12. Paul says, All who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law.

All who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be justified. For when the Gentiles, who do not have the law, which means they don't have a written law like the Jews, when the Gentiles who do not have the law by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law.

They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.

[13 : 45] On that day, when according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. So Paul says, No one has an excuse. There's nobody on the face of the planet who has an excuse for their sin, because the law of God is in some sense made known to all people as it works on their hearts and is written in a sense, imprinted upon us, as those made in the image of God, as those who are descended from Adam and Eve, we have the work of God's law written upon our hearts, leaving all people without excuse.

So the law is God's law, that law is a good law, and the work of that law is inscribed upon every person's heart. Those are the first three. Now we've also got to recognize, and this is not as easy to see in the first seven chapters of Romans.

We'll jump ahead here in a moment and see where it's stated more clearly. But we also need to recognize that the law itself promises that if you obey it perfectly, you will receive life.

The law says if you're able to keep these commandments in their entirety, then you will receive, as a reward, you will receive life for having done that.

So we can see that in one of the verses that we just read. Paul says in verse 13 of chapter 2, it's not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.

[15 : 12] It's the doers of the law, Paul says, who will be declared righteous by God. So doing the law promises life or the verdict of righteousness by God.

Turn in your Bibles all the way over to Romans chapter 10, where this is stated even more clearly. Paul says in Romans chapter 10, verse 5, he says that Moses, so now he's referring to the law, which Moses wrote, for Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them.

That is almost a direct quote from Leviticus chapter 18, verse 5, in which Moses says that those who keep these commands or these statutes, they will, in fact, live by them, which is a way of saying, if you keep this law, you get life.

The problem, though, and this is our next point that we want to make about the law, the problem is that fallen sinful people are not capable of truly or fully keeping the law of God.

So, yes, on the one hand, this good law of God that is inscribed on everyone's heart, it does promise life to those who obey it, but on the other hand, we are, all of us, as descendants of Adam and Eve, incapable, as fallen people, incapable of keeping the law of God.

[16 : 39] Paul says that in Romans chapter 7, he talks about the good that he would like to do. He delights in the law of God and yet he tells us that he's not able to do the law.

Verse 18 of Romans 7, 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.

The desire to do what is right is defined for Paul by the law of God and he says, though there's a part of me that may desire that, I do not in and of myself as a person who is in the flesh, I do not have the ability to carry that out.

Paul says in verse 23, 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. He cannot obey the law.

Move down to chapter 8, I'll show you quickly where it's stated in its most clearest form. Verses 7 and 8 of Romans 8, For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law.

[17 : 43] Indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh, that is those who do not know Christ, those who have not yet been regenerated and redeemed by Him, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

So we cannot, on our own, we cannot fully obey the law. We cannot obey it. We cannot follow its principles. And therefore, we do not have access to the life that is held out to us in the law if we would only obey it.

So if obedience does not spring from the law when we are encountered by the law, what exactly does happen when fallen, sinful people come into contact with the law?

My next three points are going to hit on what exactly happens when fallen, sinful people like you and me, come into contact with God's law. And we'll start back again in Romans chapter 7.

First point of these three points is that the law shows us what sin is. Or the law reveals our sin to us. It sheds a light.

[18 : 49] It has a defining role. It defines sin for us. Romans chapter 7, verse 7. Jump in the middle of that verse and Paul says, If it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin.

I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, you shall not covet. So the law reveals sin to us.

It shows us precisely what sin is. Yes, there is a general, vague sense of right and wrong that we have within us stamped upon our hearts as those made in the image of God.

But that becomes all the more vague when you factor in our sinful nature that is prone, as Paul says in Romans chapter 1, to deny the knowledge of God imprinted upon us.

To deny the knowledge of God revealed to us in creation. We have a tendency by our fallen nature to ignore the work of God written upon our hearts.

[19 : 50] So we need a written, clear law from God to show us right in our faces what sin is and Paul says, had it not been for that, I wouldn't have seen sin in all of its detail with all of its contours.

I wouldn't have known what coveting was had the law not confronted me and looked me in the face and said, you shall not covet. So the law defines sin for us.

Point number seven. I think it's seven. I've lost track at this point. You can number them and tell me later on. Point number seven. The law doesn't merely define sin for us.

The law actually turns sin into law breaking. The law turns normal, everyday sinning, which Paul tells us in Romans 1 through 3, that sin is a failure to glorify God as we ought to glorify Him.

Sin is a failure to render to God the honor and thanks that He is due. So anything that we do that does not give to God the honor and glory that He deserves is sin in its most basic form.

[20 : 56] But when the law comes into play, that sin, that basic failure to give God the honor and glory He deserves, now becomes something greater. It becomes law breaking or Paul often uses the word transgression.

Not merely now are we talking about a failure to give God honor and glory, now we're talking about a breaking of a specific commandment given by God to us.

Turn back to Romans chapter 4 where Paul hints at this in verse 15. Paul says in Romans 4, 15 that the law brings wrath.

We'll talk about that in a moment. But, he says, where there is no law, there is no transgression. Now circle that word transgression if you want because it's a different word from the word for sin that he uses, for instance, in Romans 3, 23 when he says, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

It's a different word. The word transgression refers to law breaking. So where there is no law, there is no technical law breaking. Move down one chapter to Romans chapter 5 where Paul says something very, very similar.

[22 : 07] At the end of verse 13 Paul says, sin is not counted where there is no law. In what sense is sin not counted? It's not counted as transgression.

It's not counted as law breaking. Move down further in Romans chapter 5 verse 20. Paul says, Now the law came in to increase the trespass.

But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. Paul means by that that the law came in to make sin worse than it is in the first place. It increased the trespass.

We are guilty as those who have heard the law of God not merely of a failure to render to God what he rightly deserves, but we are guilty of actually violating his clearly revealed word.

We have broken commandments and we have moved from the category of merely sinner to now transgressor. So the law functions to reveal sin to us and the law functions to turn regular sin into law breaking sin or transgression.

[23 : 19] A third point about what the law does when sinful people encounter it. Paul tells us back in Romans 7 again that the law also causes sinners to move headlong into more sin.

The law increases our sinful behavior. Take a look at verse in the middle of verse 7. I'm sorry, verse 8 of Romans 7. Paul says that sin seizing an opportunity through the commandment another term for law sin seizing an opportunity through the commandment produced in me all kinds of covetousness.

For apart from the law sin lies dead. What does he mean by that? He means that sin is not provoked apart from the law, but the law provokes us. Verse 9, I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

And the very commandment that promised life, remember that? It promised life. It is now proven to be death to me. Move down to verse 13. Did that which is good then bring death to me?

The good law? By no means, he says. 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, pay attention to the wording here, through the commandment, sin might become sinful beyond measure.

[24 : 38] So that when a sinner comes into contact with the law of God, the law far from causing us not to sin, motivating us not to sin, the law's initial effect is to cause us to want to sin more.

And every parent knows that. Every parent that has a kid knows if you give them rules, especially very small children who have not yet learned the concept of punishment, when you give them rules, they immediately begin to break those rules.

You tell a toddler, don't climb on that. You turn around, you turn back around, they're on top of the thing you told them not to climb on. They may have not even thought of climbing on it. But if you tell them not to, their natural response as little fallen living proofs of original sin is to climb on the thing you say not to climb on.

Because that's how we react to the law. Now of course, if the law, we've seen this, if the law comes along with severe enough punishment, the law can have the effect of curbing our sin.

But apart from severe punishment and our connecting and our minds punishment with that behavior, apart from that, the law will produce more sin, not less sin, in the lives of sinful fallen people.

[25 : 55] So all those things having been said, we can also see that as a result of the law coming in and the law turning sin into transgression and pushing us further into sin, the law actually brings about the penalty of death.

That's why Romans 6.23 tells us that the wages of sin is death. We asked the question a couple of weeks ago, who set the wages? I mean, who decided that you get paid with death by working for sin?

Who decided that death was the minimum wage for sin? And the answer that we came up with is that it was God. God decided that the penalty for sin, the penalty for breaking His law would in fact be death.

and He decided that in the law over and over. The law tells us about the curses that will fall upon those who break God's law and the curses culminate in death.

The wages of sin is indeed death. So the law, when it comes into contact with sinners, shows us our sin, turns our sin into transgression, pushes us further into sin, and then ultimately results in the penalty of death or God's wrath coming upon us.

[27 : 10] Those are the effects of the law, which leads us easily into the next point that Paul wants us to see from the book of Romans about the law. And it's very simple, that if in fact that's true, if the law is actually resulting in our death, although it promised life, we cannot use the law as a means of getting back into God's good graces.

We cannot use the law as a means of getting right with God. Or the biblical terminology, Paul's terminology for this, is that nobody can be justified.

Nobody can be declared righteous by God in his court on the basis of their obedience to the law because your obedience is lacking. It is not full, it is not true, it is not perfect, and therefore you cannot get right with God on the basis of trying to obey the law.

Turn back to Romans chapter 3, we'll see it really clearly. Romans chapter 3 verse 20, By the works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight since through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

Or verse 28, We hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. The law is not and cannot ever be a means by which we earn God's favor.

[28 : 38] The law cannot get us into heaven. The law cannot earn eternal life for us. It cannot do that because we are by nature law breakers and your obedience to the law would have to be full and perfect in order for you to receive the promise of life and it's already not full and perfect.

You are already a sinner. You probably already sinned before you even got to church this morning. It's just not possible. The law brings the penalty of death.

And this all sounds like bad news, right? This all sounds terrible. We started out well with the law is God's law, it's a good law and it promises life and then from there it just nosedives.

It all sounds bad until you realize that this law which condemns us on the basis of our having broken it. This law also points toward the good news of Jesus Christ.

Stay in chapter 3. I want you to see this in verses 19. In verse 19 down through verse 21. Paul says, Now whatever the law says speaks to those who are under the law so that every mouth may be stopped, the whole world held accountable to God.

[29 : 53] For by the works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight since through the law comes the knowledge of sin. That's all the bad news that we've seen. The law speaks and it shuts our mouths.

We have nothing to brag about anymore. We have nothing to boast about anymore. We can't get right with God by bearing the law. So how can we? Verse 20, But now the righteousness of God has been manifested.

Not our righteousness. He's not saying but now your righteousness has been made known. No, now the righteousness of God has been manifested or made known apart from the law.

Now, this is the gospel here. The righteousness of God that comes to us is the free gift of Christ's righteousness that we receive by faith.

And Paul says that righteousness of God comes apart from the law but, he says, the law has borne witness to it. Notice how he words this. The law and the prophets bear witness to it.

[30 : 57] To the righteousness of God that comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. So while the law may bring the penalty of death upon us and that sounds like bad news, if we will listen carefully with ears to hear to the law, we will see the law pointing us to Jesus.

We will see the law telling us stop looking to me for rescue and deliverance and look to the one to whom I'm pointing this entire time. The law is all about Jesus.

That's why in the gospel of Luke, after Jesus' resurrection, before the disciples are all aware that Jesus has been raised from the dead and a couple of them are wandering down the road sad and despondent and upset because the man they thought that would rescue them and deliver them has died and Jesus appears to them.

That's why Jesus is able on that evening to sit down with them and Luke tells us that he opened up to them, he interpreted to them in the law and the prophets all the things concerning himself.

You see, when Jesus opens the law, Jesus sees a mirror. Jesus sees himself when he opens the law and when he interprets the law for us, which he does in the gospel, he does through the apostles like Paul, when Jesus interprets the law for us, he shows us that the law is a picture of him.

[32 : 23] The law is pointing us to Christ and it has always been intended to serve that purpose. When God gave the law to Moses on the mountain, the people of Israel were at the bottom of the mountain worshipping a golden calf.

Do you think that God was ignorant? Do you think that God did not know that these idolatrous people were unable to keep his law? No, he knew it. They just didn't know it and they needed to be taught.

They needed to be shown that they couldn't keep the law so they would see their desperate need of someone to keep the law in their place. Which brings me to my next point.

Number 12. Number 12. Got that one right. Alright. The next point is that Jesus Christ in his life and death has perfectly obeyed the law in our place.

He has achieved the obedience that we could not achieve. And he has taken upon himself the penalty that we deserve as lawbreakers.

[33 : 31] So this is sort of a two-fold point here. Alright. Number 12. Jesus has perfectly obeyed the law of God in our place so that when we trust in him it's his obedience and his righteousness that counts as ours.

And not only that but Jesus has in himself borne the penalty for our own lawlessness when he suffered under his father's wrath upon the cross.

Look down in Romans chapter 3 again. Romans chapter 3 verse 23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward God put Jesus forward as a propitiation that's just a big word that means a sacrifice that removes wrath.

God put forward Jesus to be a sacrifice to take God's wrath. Why? To be received by faith and this was to show God's righteousness because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins and he does it at the present time Paul says our sins are passed over.

How are our sins passed over? God doesn't just pretend that sin doesn't happen God's holy and righteous he doesn't do that no our sins are passed over in us because in Christ the wrath due for our sins has been born he has taken it upon himself but he has also provided in his life the righteousness that we need look at Romans chapter 5 Romans chapter 5 verses 18 and 19 Paul says as one trespass led to condemnation for all men he's saying as Adam's sin led to all of us being condemned so one act of righteousness leads that's Jesus acts of righteousness performed throughout his life culminating his death so one act of righteousness leads to what?

[35 : 42] justification being declared righteous by God and life for all men verse 19 for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous and when we were in Romans chapter 5 I said to be made a sinner is to be counted as a sinner because of your connection to Adam and to be made righteous is to be counted righteous because of your connection to Jesus by faith so maybe the law does bring death maybe the law brings bad news but the law points to good news that in Christ the law has been satisfied it has been fulfilled and the punishment that the law prescribes for its being broken has been absorbed and taken for us by Jesus and all that belongs to us by faith in Jesus you trust in Jesus you get his righteousness counted as yours you trust in Jesus he takes the punishment for your sins and now we're on to point number 13 all of those who have been justified or declared righteous by God on the basis of faith alone in Christ alone they have now been set free from the law or Paul says they have died to the law and he also says they are no longer under the law look at chapter 7 again with me

Paul says in chapter 7 beginning in verse 4 likewise my brothers you also have died to the law through the body of Christ so that you may belong to another verse 5 while we were while we were living in the flesh our sinful passage aroused by the law were at work and our members to bear fruit for death but now we are released from the law having died to that which held us captive and then move up to chapter 4 in verse I'm sorry chapter 6 that's what got me wrong there chapter 6 in verse 16 sorry well verse I lost that one this is just too many verses I lost one out of the whole lot that's alright chapter verse 14 got it back alright Paul says for sin will not have dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace there it is you're not under law you've died to the law you're freed from the law if of course you are in Christ if you've trusted in Christ if his righteousness has been counted to you by faith you're not under the law anymore you're no longer living your life trying to check off all the boxes you're no longer living your life by trying to do just do all the minutia of the law no you're free from that burden but not only are you free from that burden point number 14 those who have been justified by faith alone in Christ alone are now indwelt by the Holy Spirit who causes them to fulfill the law through love let me show you this in the text

Romans chapter 7 verse 6 but now we are released from the law having died to that which held us captive so that we serve in a new way of the spirit and not in the old way of the written code we serve God in a new way and Paul says that new way is by the power of the Holy Spirit if you want to know what that looks like turn over to chapter 8 in chapter 8 beginning in verse 3 Paul says God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin he condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in those who walk according to the spirit and you only have to move ahead to chapter 13 of Romans to have that filled out even more Romans 13 verse 8 oh no one

I'm sorry not verse 8 yeah verse 8 oh no one anything except to love each other for the one who loves another has fulfilled fulfilled the law notice if you love one another you have fulfilled the law and now he's going to quote some commandments from the law that deal with loving others the commandments you shall not commit adultery you shall not murder you shall not steal you shall not covet and any other commandment are summed up in this word you shall love your neighbor as yourself all the law Paul says is summed up in this word verse 10 love does no wrong to a neighbor therefore love is the fulfilling of the law the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within all those who trust in Jesus and he he does not turn us into legalistic box checkers didn't commit adultery today didn't covet today that one's harder to check off most of the time didn't murder anybody today and steal anything today he doesn't turn us into box checkers you'll find it harder to check those boxes off if you read the sermon on the mount anyway he doesn't do that to us what does he do what work is he doing inside of us he's transforming us he's making us into loving people so that we begin to love

God with all our hearts we begin to love our neighbors as ourselves and Paul says that that is the fulfilling of the law if you will but love the way that God tells us to love you will have fulfilled the law and that happens in the lives of those who have trusted in Christ and therefore been indwelt by the Holy Spirit throughout your life as a Christian you are now continually being transformed into a more and more loving person it doesn't happen overnight you don't trust in Jesus and wake up the next morning loving everybody to the fullest extent that you ought to love them you will still get irritated with your brother or your sister you will still not like your boss at times you will still have spats with your neighbors sometimes but you will find yourself over the years as God does the work of sanctification in your life the work of making you holy through the Spirit you will find that you begin to love people who quite frankly are not that lovable you will find yourself loving people that you did not think you ever would be able to love you have compassion for people that you did not think you could have compassion for and that's the work and by doing that work in our hearts he causes the law to be fulfilled in us so that we move from being a people unable to get life who've received life for free we move from being a people unable to obey the law to a people fulfilling the law through love and all that is due to the work of Christ on the cross for us and the work of the Spirit in our hearts upon us the law of God is indeed good if we can hear it telling us look to

[43 : 09] Jesus and if you find yourself this morning as one of those who still feels under the law you think of yourself as a pretty decent good person if you compare yourself to the next guy down the street you're probably a better person than him but that comes with it a great heavy weight I say to you be released from that be released from the weight of the law through faith in Jesus and let his righteousness be all your hope and not your own that is faltering and flimsy and thin in the end anyway but take his perfect pure righteousness and know that along with that gift of righteousness comes the power of the Holy Spirit to change you and make you new do not leave this place if you are still in the flesh and under the law do not leave until you know what it is to trust in Jesus and be justified until you begin to feel the work of being sanctified let's pray