

# Romans 7:7-22

Sunday 11/30/2008

SEC: The Great Death Chapters: Romans 6, 7, and 8

I told you how Romans 6, 7, and 8 are really the doctrinal chapters for you and for me. We call them the great death chapters, not because anybody dies in them, but in relationship to certain things. Once we are in Christ, we are dead to the things of this world. Each chapter deals with a different aspect. We saw in chapter 6 how we are dead to the flesh, and in chapter 7, we are looking at how we are dead to the law.

Really, chapters 6, 7, and 8 all go together. As you lay it out and get it, that is what we are trying to do: to help you get a better handle on the Book of Romans. The Book of Romans is one of the books that is absolutely key for understanding who you are in Christ, what God has for you, and getting the right doctrine.

Next week, remember, we started chapter 7, and I showed you a great illustration of a man and a woman married under the Old Testament law. The man was a type of your flesh, and the woman was a type of your soul. They were cut loose at the time you got saved—your flesh and your soul—and now you are free to marry another, which is Christ. It was a great example. To me, that is exactly what God does through the Holy Spirit of God to help us understand tough passages. He will give you a practical illustration that you can really grasp, and then you just kind of take it from there and make the application to it.

SEC: Understanding Biblical Divisions

I told you last week how every book of the Bible has a natural division to it. It is really the key to understanding the Bible. I remember years ago when I was trying to get a handle on the Bible myself, I came across that great truth. I probably spent eight or nine years going through each book of the Bible and finding those natural divisions. It really was the key to help me understand the Bible, and it is certainly the key for you understanding it.

What God has done, the Bible looks like a very intimidating book. It is like anything until you understand how it breaks itself down and you find the natural biblical outline. That is where the real key of coming in to see how it lays itself out. You have to be able to put it into the natural breakdown that God writes into His own book.

When we talked about the Book of Romans, I told you last week when we started the Book of Romans how Romans looked like a very intimidating book. But if you just break it down into four sections, if you just look at the first section being the historical section, the second section being the doctrinal section, the third section being a prophetic section, and the last section, the fourth section, being a practical section, it is just that simple. Once you take that book and you break it down into those four areas, then you can take each section and study it, and you will see that they break down. It is just a simple way of breaking down the Word of God that you can grasp it.

Each book of the Bible does that. I have never found a book of the Bible that did not have a natural outline, a natural breakdown, and that is because each book of the Bible has a specific purpose, it has a specific theme, and breaking it down and understanding the breakdown is how you learn it.

We are coming through each book of the Bible. I know we have not done 1 Samuel yet, but I have a lot of things people are doing right now, and I do not want to just crowd the issue with things to give you something more to do. We will get back to that after we get through some of the specialized classes that we have. I think that trying to teach you the Bible and going through the books of the Bible at the sacrifice of not helping you grasp your own personal relationship with God is not a very good thing to do. So we are going to hold on 1 Samuel for a while, not too long, and then we are going to get some of this other stuff done. After the first of the year, then we will jump back into 1 Samuel.

We have been coming through every book of the Bible. What I have been doing in those books is showing you the natural breakdown. It is absolutely key. You are going to find that not only do the books of the Bible do it, but the chapters do it many, many times. Each chapter lays itself out through a natural division. Sometimes it will be done by the paragraph marks in the Bible. Sometimes it will be done by subject matter.

SEC: Romans 7: Three Sections

Romans chapter 7 is a good example of that because if you want to understand Romans chapter 7, this chapter itself breaks down into three sections, and I want to give you those three sections so you can put them in your Bible, and next time you read it or study it, you will have it there.

- Romans 7:1-6: The Law's Illustration
- Romans 7:7-22: The Struggle with the Flesh
- Romans 7:23-25: Future Deliverance

These natural breakdowns, basically when you get them down, they lead to a better understanding of the Scripture. What it does, if you read the Book of Romans or any book of the Bible, it just kind of all runs together. You do not know where to start and where to stop. You do not know when he is ending one thought and starting another, and it can be confusing. This is why people, I believe anyhow, this is why so many people start—I believe they want to read the Bible, they start to read the Bible—but they get confused when they start reading it because they do not know what they are reading. They do not know where to start and where to stop. They do not know what he is saying because they do not know where he ends one thought and he begins another. The Bible can be that way. Of course, the answer to that is to let somebody help you break it down. Somebody helped me break it down. I want to help you break it down so when you read the Bible, you can read it with better understanding that keeps it from running all together.

SEC: The Law and Sin

All right, let us read Romans chapter 7. We will pick it up in verse 7 and come down through verse 22 or 23; then we will come back and make some comments on it here. Here is what he said:

*Romans 7:7-23*

*What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

*But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.*

*For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*

*And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.*

*For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.*

*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

*Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.*

*For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

*For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.*

*If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.*

*Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

*For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

*Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*

*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

Father, we ask You now to give us insight into today. Help us to take the Word of God and dissect it out. Help me to take this passage and break it down for these folks that they might be able to have a better understanding of this great battle that we struggle with. Lord, we have learned a lot of things from Romans, and if we, one of the things we should have seen by now, is

how Romans compounds itself; it builds on other teachings and other ideas and other concepts. Lord, we have already looked at Romans chapter 6, and now we are going to build on top of that something else that ties in with that that helps us better understand where we are at. Lord, we need You today, Holy Spirit of God, to give us what we need and help us to see and understand all the great truths that You have for us in this book. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it, Amen.

Now, I am sure that you also recognize that this is a passage that we have talked about many, many times. It has been asked on Thursday nights. We covered it in, I think it was in Romans 3 or maybe Romans 4, we went back here, and it has to deal with your children and winning your children to Christ and the age of accountability. This is the passage that we go to to look at that and to see how the fact that your child is under grace, or God imputes no sin to that child until they reach that point in their life where they transgressed the law, know good from evil, and then make the wrong choice. Obviously, we use that passage, but I need to help you understand that that is not really the main purpose of the passage; that is kind of a side benefit of the passage.

This is a great passage that lays out verse by verse our inner struggle, and I want you to remember the little phrase that I gave you just a few moments ago all through this and kind of make a mental note of it in your mind that you can bring it back and remember it: that we are not stuck to a dead man, but we are stuck with one, and that dead man is your flesh. It really does not have control over you anymore unless you allow it to. Of course, before you were saved, we were stuck to it; after we are saved, we are just stuck with it, and we have got to put up with it. This is the great context here of these verses in Chapter 7.

Now, I am going to break these verses down, and we are going to get a better understanding of them. I would suggest that if you are adamant about learning the Book of Romans, that by each one of these verses, you just kind of put a little highlight of what I am telling you here. I do not know that you can get it all in, but down the line. The Book of Romans is a book that it probably took me 20 or 30 times to get it down. I go through a chapter and I say to myself, "I got it," and I put my notes in there, and I say, "I got it, I finally got this chapter." A week later, I go back and read it, and I could not figure out anything I had or what had made any sense. It is one of those books that takes a while to go through, and I am just telling you, it is a book that the key to it is staying with it. I want to try to help you as I learned all through the years, maybe save you some time. I wish I had had somebody break it down for me as I am trying to break it down for you, but that might help you with it. We are going to look at this thing so we can understand each verse and bid out some great truth.

I will look at verse 7 now. Here is what he says, and I want you to understand what he is saying here. Get a context.

*Romans 7:7*

*What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

People have weird ideas about the Old Testament Ten Commandments, or which is called the law, too. You find people that say their life is to keep the Golden Rule. I have had people that I have tried to win to Christ and witness to them, and they said, "Well, I have not broken any of the Ten Commandments," and "I try to keep the Ten Commandments," and all of those things, or "I have kept the Ten Commandments," or "I observed the Ten Commandments." Of course, one of the things that people do not understand, and maybe I can help you define a little bit today, is that the Ten Commandments—remember the Ten Commandments that Moses got back there in Exodus chapter 20—when God gave them to Moses, God never gave them for a man to keep them. God never intended that to be a standard by which you would go to heaven by. We think that we keep the Ten Commandments or the Golden Rule, "do unto others before they get a chance to do it to you," and all that. If you keep them, the law was not given to get you to heaven by keeping it.

In reality, the law was given that by the law, which was a perfect standard that no man can keep, the law was not given that you and I might try to keep it, though we need to try to keep it, but you will never keep it. The law, that was not its purpose. The law's purpose was to show you and me how far we fell short of what God expected. That is what the law was for. It was not given that I could keep it because nobody can keep it. You know the difference between Jesus Christ and me? The only basic difference between Jesus Christ and me is the fact that He kept the whole law, and I could not keep it. You know what somebody says, and I gave you this verse last week in James, where somebody says, "Well, I keep most of it." The Bible says you can keep it all in James 2:10, and just break one of them, and you are guilty of them all. See, the law was not given for you and me to keep. Now, I say that, but at the same time, I say you ought to try to live by them as best you can. That means there are good rules of standards of living, no question about that. But the idea of trying to keep them and keeping them is going to get you to heaven is a fallacy because God's original purpose was not to give them to you so you could keep them. God's original purpose was to give them to you, you would try to keep them, you would fail in keeping them, and then it would point you that you needed something else to help you.

You know what Galatians 3:24 says? Now, in the Book of Galatians, and this is a good book, in the Book of Galatians, it is written in the New Testament long after Christ is dead, been buried, and rose again. Paul writes to the church of Galatia on one of his missionary trips. He starts that church. He writes the Book of Galatians because after he left, some people had come in, and they had started to teach these New Testament Christians that, "Oh yeah, you have to believe in Jesus Christ, but you also have to keep the law." See? It would be a lot like somebody coming in here and standing behind this pulpit and saying, "Well, Bob is right when he says that you have to believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross. No question about that. You cannot ignore the law. You have got to believe in Jesus Christ, and you also have got to try to keep the commandments of God." See? Now that is what they were teaching. In that book, Paul is dealing with them, and he is saying, "Hey, you guys have been bewitched. Somebody has come in here and began to change the gospel." He says, "You do not understand," and he says this in Galatians 3:24: He says the law was not given to you to keep, but he makes a great parallel here. He says the law, the Old Testament law, is your schoolmaster to bring you to Christ.

What does that mean? What does your school teacher do for you? Well, in many of our cases, not much. Not so much on their part, but on our part. I think a teacher is the greatest, next to a pastor. I think a teacher is the greatest profession in the world. I think they are underpaid. I think they are under, you know, nobody ever thanks them. I think they do more. I mean, let us face it, we could not read, we could not write, we could not do most of the things we do if somebody would not have given up their life who probably could have made a lot more money doing something else. But because they were dedicated to teaching and giving you what you needed to have, we can function today.

Now, what the law did as a schoolmaster, a schoolmaster would stand up there and teach you what you need to know to point you toward an education. They would basically form the basic foundations in grammar school that you get into junior high, that you get into high school, and then you get on to college. But it all starts with a schoolmaster, somebody that is a teacher bringing you to the point, showing you what you need to do, showing you what is right, showing you what is wrong, and showing you where your deficiencies are.

You know why they have parent-teacher meetings? I know why you think they have them: so your teacher can rat on you. No. The reason why they do that is because a teacher is concerned about your learning abilities. He or she has observed you now, and what they want to do with your parents is guarantee that you get everything out of what your parents are paying for through their taxes in the school system. So they sit down with your parents and they say, "She is doing really well in this, she is doing pretty good in this, not doing very well in this. He is doing terrible in this, he is doing pretty well in this. He just does not apply himself. He daydreams. He does not pay attention. She has a short attention span. She does not turn in her homework on time." Now, we look at that as being ratted out. The teacher looks at that as showing your deficiencies. That is what the law does. When your teacher sits down with your parents and says, "Bob is a great kid, but here is where he falls short based on the standard that we have of teaching." The law says, "Bob thinks he is a great guy, but he falls short of what God expected because he cannot even approach the law to be able to keep it." That is how important it is.

Now, what he is saying in verse 7, or should I say the point he is trying to make, he is trying to say this, and this is what you want to understand about verse 7: He is saying, "Because the law showed me that I was a sinner, that does not make the law a sinful thing." See what he is saying? "What shall we say then? Is the law sin?" See what he is saying is just because the law tells me I am a sinner, it does not mean that the law is sinful. Just the opposite. The law is perfect. The law is holy. You see, the law is not sin, but rather the law reveals my sin. Your school teacher was not a bad person; she just revealed to your parents what your deficiencies were. So when he talks about the law, he likens the law to a schoolmaster. Someone who sits down and teaches you but also points out your deficiencies. There is no sin in the law. The thing that you need to realize is that the sin does not cause, the law does not cause you to sin. The law rather reveals our sin. That is what he says in verse 7. He says, "I had not known sin, but by the law." See? "Except the law said, Thou shalt not covet." In other words, the entrance of the law reveals the deficiencies that you and I have of keeping it because try as we will, we will never be able to keep the law. That is why, ladies and gentlemen, that when Christ came down and God sent His Son, the only way that

He could save us, when we talk about winning somebody to Christ, the only way that you can get Christ's salvation in your life to save you is simply because He did for you and for me what we could not do ourselves. You know what He did? He kept the law. He kept the law where I could not. Romans 3:20 says, "by the law is the knowledge of sin."

All right? Now look at verse 8.

*Romans 7:8*

*But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.*

You are going to find that twice in this passage you will find a reference to sin taking an occasion. You will find it once in verse 8 and again in verse 11. What he is basically saying here is that when the commandment came, when you and I began to understand right from wrong, we now have knowledge of sin in our lives, and when you do that, sin will take advantage and seize the opportunity, and thereby deceiving us and spiritually killing us, making us a sinner.

Now look at the word there in verse 8, "wrought." See that thing? That is an old English word. "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought." Now that is not "rot" like something rotten. It is "wrought." The word "wrought" there, it means "formed by a work." When you "wrought" something, it is something, it is a work. It is something that you do. It says in there, "wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." Ah, there is a big \$25 word. I promise you by next week I will find out what that word means. We are just going to have to pass over it today. No. The word "concupiscence" means evil passion. In other words, once you and I, what he is saying here is this: Once you and I came to that point in our life where we knew right from wrong, then because of the fact that we had a work going on inside us that was against God, our flesh, what happens is that it deceives us. By it, our deception, it slays us because it brings out that evil passion that we all have inside of us. This is why you cannot get saved by works. You have to get saved by grace.

SEC: Dr. Law and Dr. Grace

Lester Roloff. I do not know, how many know who Lester Roloff is? Oh, a few of you. Okay, good deal. Lester Roloff, he has been dead now probably 20 some years. He was a great preacher. I used to hear him preach when I was just a young guy. I would go to camps and be at camp. He was a great camp speaker. He ran a place down in Corpus Christi, Texas, for incorrigible kids. He had a farm down there where he took kids, and if they were incorrigible or you could not control them, you could send them down to his place, and they would try to work with them. He was an incredible guy. He was an old-time preacher. He was definitely one of the last of the Philadelphian preachers. He preached simple messages, but they were so profound. I remember they would have stupid little titles, but when you would hear them, he would take one little thing in the Bible, and he would build a sermon around that one thing, and by the time he is done, he just devastates you.

Two of the sermons I remember, one of them I remember was titled, "And the Mule Walked On." Now let me ask you a question for you Bible theologians here. If I would say to you, he preached

a message on "the mule walked on," where would you say he was preaching at in the Bible? It is just a little game here. Anybody? No, raise your hand. "The mule walked on." Yeah. No, but that was good. That is good. No, but that is very good. That is very good. I could see how you think that is very good. I mean, anybody want to tell me where "the mule walked on"? Yeah. No, no, no. He did not walk on there. He spoke. But very good. Anybody? Anybody want one more time? We are going to, I do not want to waste a lot of time with that. John has his hand out in the back. Yeah. Was the lion killed? The prophet? The mule alive by the lion? No, no. No, no. But I used to think of where the mules are. That is good. I was going to ask everybody after the story about the story about the camel, but I am afraid you all pull your cigarettes off, so everybody will not do that one. Well, that is that thing. Remember that Thor and Rebecca when, you know, I had a guy, I actually preached at one time back there in Genesis where I told you last week, you know, where she came in there. And I actually had a preacher, you know, just a young guy. And it says that, you know, Isaac brought Rebecca in and she said, and then they met and she lighted off the camel. And he says, "See, there is nothing wrong with smoking." He "let it off a camel." Not what it is saying there. But anyhow. All right, John, tell us where it is at. Where? No. Where in the Bible did the dead, the mule walk on? I know it is kind of a tricky deal. I am not trying to trap you. Remember the story Absalom? Got your gun with you today? You do. Okay. Well, there are a couple of guys back. I am not sure. I will ask you to shoot one of them. I want you to go ahead and do it. Remember the story in Absalom where he is on the mule and he is running, and he had that beautiful hair? Remember? And he got caught in the branches by his hair. Remember? And the mule did what? The mule walked on. The mule walked on, see? And he built one of the greatest messages around that little goofy thing. But that is what he did. He was just an old farm boy. He never had much of an education, but boy, he loved God and knew the Bible. One of the greatest messages I ever heard him preach was "the mule walked on."

He is the guy that originally preached the sermon that I preached many, many times. I never preached it to you here, but he preached a message on "the laughter of God." There are four types of laughter in the Bible. He took that, and I have got to tell you this. We were down at Chautauqua Christian Camp. Chautauqua was down along the Ohio border, and it was a really rough town because river towns or, you know, rivers to cities are always really tough. It was always a rough camp. We get in there, and there would be about five, six hundred teenagers in there. We went down there one time, took some people down from our church, and he was preaching that night. It was a rough camp. I mean, rough camp because there were some guys and gals, you know, they would not turn over to God. It was a real spiritual battle. The third night, which was Wednesday night, he preached a message on "the laughter of God." It was in a big tent. While he started to preach that message, the worst thunderstorm I ever heard in my life came up. I mean, he is up there preaching, and the lightning was crashing, and the thunder was racking, and the rain was coming down. He is preaching up there on "the laughter of God." Right in the middle of his sermon, the tent pegs blew out, and the whole tent came down on 500 kids out of that thing. Everybody is screaming. Somebody had a tape of it, and you could hear the tent coming down. You could hear people screaming and yelling and through the whole thing. You could hear old Lester Roloff still hammering the point about "the laughter of God." Of course, a great revival broke out, and that was one of the highlights of my life, actually being there to hear that and see that. It was a great thing.

But he used to have a message, which I thought was the greatest message in an illustrative form that illustrated what we got in Romans chapter 7. He used to preach a message called "Dr. Law and Dr. Grace." Anybody ever heard that message? Good. I am not going to tell you what it is. I will say that and preach it that online. So play. Here is what he would say. He would open the thing up, and he would talk about Dr. Law and what he was doing. He was illustrating the difference between, like Romans chapter 7, the law in its relationship to us and then grace. Here is what he would say. I cannot preach the whole message, but here is what he would say: Dr. Law was a great doctor. When you go in to see Dr. Law, Dr. Law would listen to you. He lets you tell him what your problems were. Dr. Law then would tell you, he would diagnose for you what your problem was. Dr. Law would be very specific. Dr. Law would not speak in generality, but Dr. Law would be able to tell you what is wrong with you and every inner detail because that was Dr. Law's job. But Dr. Law could not prescribe a medicine to fix your problem. You see, Dr. Law, all he could do was tell you what was wrong with you. Dr. Law did not have the ability to fix what was wrong with you. Once Dr. Law defined for you what your problem was, then he sent you to his associate, Dr. Grace. Dr. Grace would take you with your problem and have the solution to solve the problem that you have. But Dr. Grace could not operate without Dr. Law because where Dr. Law could diagnose the problem, Dr. Law could not fix the problem. Where Dr. Grace could fix the problem, he could not operate without the counterpart Dr. Law telling you what your problem was. See how it works? The law shows you what is wrong with you and I, Dr. Law. But Grace is what God uses to fix what is wrong with us. See how it works? Well, those are the kind of simple sermons—simple, my foot, profound, but in simplicity—that I was raised under, see? Those guys knew how to take the Bible, unlike guys that you hear today, they are just wisps of smoke. There is no, there is no thought to it. There is no depth to it. Those old boys were able to take a passage and open that thing up and just give you more gold nuggets than you could ever carry home. Why? Because they believed the book that they were preaching, and they had a relationship with it.

Dr. Law and Dr. Grace. You see the law, there is nothing wrong with the law, but it diagnosed what our problem was. But the law cannot fix it, so it sends you over to Dr. Grace. When you got saved, you did not get saved by the works of the law. You got saved by grace through faith. But Dr. Law had to diagnose the problem, but only Dr. Grace could fix it. Oh, my friend, what a great, great illustration that was. You know what? That is the biblical format for everything in Christian life. Some of you are aspiring to work with me in counseling and working with people. Some of you will make pretty good counselors. You are already well on your way, and you get a lot of experience, and we put you in a lot of scenarios, and you do very well with it, and you are going to get better in time at it. But the same format is here. You cannot help somebody fix the problem that they have until you first have them see what the problem is.

You know what I found in dealing with people? You are going to find what I call the Baptist two-step shuffle. Now, I know Baptists are not supposed to dance, but boy, for somebody who is not supposed to dance, there are a lot of Baptists that do a lot of dancing, dancing around the Word of God, right? And dancing around the issues. The bottom line is this: You are going to start dealing with people, and you are going to try to, before you can fix them, before you can administer the grace to them to help them solve their problem, they have got to first identify that

problem. I have told you many, many times that out of this thing right here, when you are learning this, God is going to show you what issues you have in your life. Your job is to identify those issues, attack those issues, and in time, solve those issues. If you are not willing to do that and be honest about your issues, you will never solve the problem.

We see it in dealing with people. How many times has somebody come in here and had issues? You know, when Wilson Allen talked with them, you know, and I will put them up, work with some of you folks, and you will take them, and you will work with them, and you will start to disciple them, and you will do this, and you will do that, and you will help them. But the bottom line is this: You only meet with them a couple of weeks, and you start to, when you start to meet with them, you start to see the old Baptist two-step shuffle. They start to dance around the real issues. You know they have an issue? They insist they do not have an issue. But that issue keeps messing them up. They are not willing to diagnose what the real problem is. You know what that takes? You know what it means that when you and I stop, sit down, and look at our issues and die? You know what that really is? It is simply getting honest with yourself. It is stopping and saying, "Okay, I am going to quit playing games. I have this issue, and I can dance around it all day long. I can pretend I do not have it." You know what? It is like that internet commercial with the two turtles. You know, they are playing hide and seek with a guy and a girl turtle, and she is sticking her rear end, it is sticking out behind the couch, and she thinks she is hiding? And he says, "I can see her butt." She thinks she is hid. Now this part is hid, and she is over there saying, "I am hiding," but the rear end is sticking out. What we do in our world of worlds, we just think we hide, but our rear end is always sticking out. Now, you know what? That is just the way it is. The first thing it takes for you to get your problems solved, whatever it may be, you have got to get honest with yourself. You have got to realize that you have an issue.

I would be more than happy in all the world. It would save me so much time. It would save me so much, save you much time. I do not worry about me because I get paid for it. What bothers me is when many of you sacrifice your family time, give up this, give up that, to work with people, and all you do is you think you are going to discipleship, but in reality, you are going to a dance. That is all it is. I just assume somebody when you diagnose it, they say, "You know what? That is my problem, but I have got to be honest with you. I kind of do not want to fix it. I do not really want to do it. I know if I do it, I will last about a week because that is just me, and so I just assume it would save everybody a lot of time." But it never works that way. It never works that way. No. The bottom line is before you can fix anything in your life, this principle goes all the way through the Bible. You have to be willing to be honest with yourself and say, "This is my problem," and then deal with that problem. You cannot blame it on somebody else. You cannot blame it on the way you were raised. You cannot blame it on your parents. You cannot blame it on this. I mean, obviously, things in life have an effect on us and bring us to a point. But you know what? Once you are confronted with the Bible, once you become a new creature in Christ Jesus, the Bible does say that all things become passed away. All things become new. There comes a time in your life where you have got to quit blaming it on everybody else. You have got to step up to the plate and say, "No, I am going to eat this when it is mine." Dr. Law and Dr. Grace. Of course, that is what the law does. The law shows you and I what our deficiency is. But grace is the one that solves that problem.

## SEC: Innocence and Deception

All right, now look at verses 9, 10, 11, and 12. It says,

*Romans 7:9-12*

*For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*

*And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.*

*For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.*

*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

Now look at verse 9, and this is the verse that we use in dealing with your children. But it is also true of you and me. It says in verse 9, "For I was alive without the law once." What does that mean? It means there was a time in your life and my life, just like if you have a little kid back there in the nursery or in the elementary, and they are probably, you know, still under the age of accountability, that they are alive without the law. What does that mean? It means that the law has, because they do not know right from wrong, they are in innocence. Now, does that mean they do everything right? No, no, no, no. Many times they do many things that are wrong. There is no sin imputed to them because they have no knowledge in their mind that what they are doing is a breaking of God's law. In time, as they grow up, they learn that, and that is what he is saying here when he says, "I was alive without the law once." Right now, if you have a little baby or you have little children, or it is true in your life when you were once a little child, you were, no sin was imputed to you, but there came a time in your life. You were alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, see, there is going to come a day in that little baby's life or that little child's life where they are going to realize what is right and wrong, and then what is going to happen is sin is going to take occasion, sin is going to revive, and they are going to be dead spiritually. "And the commandment," verse 10, "which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."

Did you ever notice the pattern? You know, the example in the Bible is Adam and Eve. Now Adam and Eve were created, they were created with age. They were not like little, they were not, they did not grow up. When God made them, He created them with the appearance of age. They were adults when He made them. He did not make them as little children and allow them to grow up. He made them in that format that they were already young adults or wherever they were. But they were in innocence. When you look at that story back there, you find an exact picture and a pattern of the way you and I were before sin revived and we died. You see in their lives before they took the forbidden fruit, which was the commandment of God. Up to that point when they broke what the law that God told them, He said of all the trees in the garden, you can freely eat except one. That was a commandment. They broke that commandment, and everything they did up to that point, God did not impute to them because they were in innocence. Now that is the way your child is right now. Your child is going to grow up someday, and they are going to be faced with the same decision that Adam and Eve were faced with, and they too will break the law by making the wrong choice, just like you and I at one point in our life were alive without the law once. But sin revived, and we died when the commandment came.

Now that model is a tremendous model to help understand not only where you and I were before we had to get saved, but where your children are. You ever notice a similarity between Adam and Eve and us as little children or as your children? You notice that both you and when Adam and Eve, when they were not born but when they were created, when you were born, you both were naked? You realize that when Adam and Eve after they were created, they were naked? They did not have to have any clothes until after the fall. They walked around naked, and they were not ashamed. You ever notice your little children? You have somebody over, you know, very important, and they are in the room there playing somewhere, and next thing you know, they have taken off all their clothes, and they are marching out in the living room. You have got Pastor Pyle there, you know, or somebody over here, and they just, you know, and they are singing on top. It would not be so bad if they were not just naked, but they are singing, "Boys and Girls for Jesus," you know, as they are marching through, you know. Little kids do not care. Years ago, I was out on the porch talking to my neighbor, and you know, I looked behind me, and both my girls came out, they were stark naked. "Hi, Daddy, what is going on?" "You are naked, that is what is going on." They did not care. They did not care.

You ever notice how I see you do it all the time with your kids? I did it with mine, you do it with yours all the time. You know what you are always telling them to do? "Don't touch that. Don't touch that. Don't touch that. Don't touch that. I am going to tell you one more time, don't touch that." Kid looks at his sister and says, "One more time, that meant we got nine more times before you are going to do anything." "Don't touch that." You know what God said? "Don't touch that tree. Don't touch it." You ever notice how your kids always have, and you see this all the time, I do not care how small they are, they always have an affinity for putting things in their mouth. You know what I am saying? I do not care what it is. Sometimes you better care what it is. They will put anything in. You give them something, it goes in their mouth. Pick up a crayon, it goes in their mouth. You pick up a pencil, it goes in their mouth. You take a magic marker, it goes in their mouth. You give them anything, it goes in their mouth. You know why? Because God told Adam and Eve, "The day you eat it, ye shall surely die." They had an affinity for putting things in their mouth.

You ever notice when you get your kids, if you have got more than one, and one of them does something wrong, you hear a bang or a crash, and you run into the room, and suddenly the room is gone, everybody is in there. They have this thing to learn built into them to run and hide. You know what Adam and Eve did when they did sin, and God came down? They ran and hid. Oh, they ran and hid. Then when you finally do catch them, oh, it goes on with my grandkids all the time, when I am with my kids, when you do finally catch them, "Well, no, Maddie did it. Maddie Kenzie did it," or "Otis knocked it over." I know you think Otis is the drunk on Mayberry R.F.D., that is not true. Here is our little dog downstairs or upstairs. Yes, we have an upstairs dog and a downstairs dog. When God came to Adam and Eve, and He said to Adam, she said to Eve, she says, "Eve, what did you do?" You know what Eve said? She said, "The devil made me do it." He was writing lines already then for Flip Wilson. He looked at Adam, and he says, "Adam, what did you do?" You know what Adam said? He said, "Well, Lord, the woman You gave me." Now you can use that guy down the line someplace; that comes in handy. You put in front of your kids

meat and vegetables on one side and fruit, cherries, grapes on this side, they will take the fruit every time. Every time. Every time. Every time.

You see the pattern of Adam and Eve in innocence, no sin imputed, is just like your children right now, and like what you and I were when the Bible says in verse 9, "For I was alive without the law once. But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." As a little child, I mean, your little child, you know, right now, and you know, you may have a two-year-old from hell. You may have a child that just gets into everything. You may have a child that is just all kinds of handful, and it may be two, three, four years old, and you know, you may be certainly, I mean, when that kid sleeps at night, you are probably very carefully with a flashlight, you with a comb, looking under his head for that little 666 that is on there in Omen one, two, and three and four. Are you sure you have got the antichrist? I am sure you have got the antichrist. The little child, they may be the two-year-old kid from hell, but until they associate their actions with the breaking of the law, there is no sin imputed to them.

You ever note how many sins Eve committed long before she took the forbidden fruit? You ever catalog that? It is worth a study. One of the things that we find out is that she had some kind of resentment even while God was talking with her about what God had told her because she disobeyed it. She was looking for the opportunity, so that just did not happen. She had been thinking that in her heart. Long before she took the forbidden fruit, she conveniently changed what God said because she did not like it and made it say what she liked. You know something else she did? She listened to false accusations about God and never gave God the benefit of a doubt. Then if that was not all, when the devil finally did show up, she coveted. She coveted. She said, the devil, he says, "Now look at this tree. It is good for food," lust of the eyes. "It will make one wise," pride of life. "It is pleasant to the eyes," lust of the eyes. She was involved in all of that, but sin was not imputed to her until she broke what God told her not to do. That is your kid. That is you. "I was alive without the law once." Did you do everything right? Absolutely not. Right now, you will tell your kid, "Don't do that," and they will go do it. You will say, "Don't pick that up." They will pick it up and then they will break it. Then you will say to them, "Now, didn't I tell you not to pick it up? Don't ever pick it up again." You know what? A week later, two weeks later, an hour later, they will pick something else up and break it. They will disobey you. They will do whatever they want to do. If you do not discipline them to the point, you are going to wind up raising somebody that is going to give you all kinds of problems. But the bottom line is they are in innocence. Because they have not understood right from wrong, because they have not consciously come up face to face with the law of God and consciously chose to break that law, they are still in innocence. "I was alive once without the law. But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." That is what he said. That is your children. That is you and me. Of course, we are past that point.

But verse 11 says, "sin taking the occasion deceived me and slew me." Now the key word here, ladies and gentlemen, is "deceived." In Genesis chapter 3, you do not find the word "deceived." You find the word "beguiled." "Beguiled" is another word for "deceived." Genesis 2:14, the Bible clearly tells you that the woman Eve was deceived in the transgression. He deceived her.

Revelation 12:9 talks about the devil who "deceiveth the whole world." Luke 21:8, the Bible says, "Take heed that ye be not deceived."

Do you ever see how, and this is a great study in itself, do you ever go back and do an analysis, a situation study on how she got deceived? You know how she got deceived? It is the same way, ladies and gentlemen, you and I deceive ourselves today. Same way. You see, when that commandment comes, sin takes the occasion of the law and the occasion of where we are at, and then it deceives us. Eve got deceived, and Eve's deception made her a sinner. There came a time when you and I, for my life, that we were once in innocence, but when we got deceived, we became sinners, and for the most part, every problem we have in our life today is nothing more than a continuation of that deception.

You know why the Bible is so important? You know why I have you put those little verses on 3x5 cards? You know why the Bible says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee"? "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." You know why the Bible says, "How shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word"? You know why the Bible says that? Because the only way to keep from being deceived is to have the Word of God that you go by. You know what Eve did? She deceived herself because she thought she knew more about what God said than what God said. She was just sure God did not mean what He said, so she changed the principle and got deceived.

You know how we get into problems? Every one of us. Every one of us. You know how we get into problems? We get into problems because at the end of the day, ladies and gentlemen, when you have an issue in your life, and somebody tries to tell you, whether it is me, whether it is your mother, whether it is your father, whether it is some friend, you simply think that we are right and you are wrong. You think that you are the exception to the rule. You think you are going to beat the system. You think the Bible, when the Bible says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked," what a man sows, that is what he is going to be. That did not apply to you. You think that you are the angle around everything that God said, and you are the exception to the rule. Ladies and gentlemen, we are not the exception to the rule. We get the problem we get in our lives simply basically because the devil deceives us. You know how he deceives us? He deceives us by helping us think that God does not know what He is talking about.

I tell people who are working with people, and you start to sit down and lay out the Word of God for them, and about a week or two weeks into it, they start telling you what is going on. Forget it. If you know how to fix your problem, you do not need me. I certainly do not need to waste my time arguing with you when I know you are wrong and the book is right. You see, that is how you got deceived. A guy said to me one time, he said, "Well, I think I ought to do this." I said, "Oh, you are the expert on it now. You are 28 years old. You made every mess in your life. You have been married three times. You are upside down. You lost your job. You have absolutely nothing to do. You gave me your day, and you are the expert on biblical principles." You have deceived yourself. See. Deception. That is what the devil does. That is why you never go wrong with the book. Stay with the book. Stay with the book. You say, "I do not like everything it says." You think I do? I do not like it. You know what the Bible says? The Bible says, "He that loveth

the honeycomb, even the bitter things are sweet." I may not like what it says, but at the end of the day, I know what is best for me.

We all were growing up teenagers. You always like what your father said. What your mother said. When I was 17 years old, I thought my father and my mother were the dumbest people in the world. Ouch. When I was 17, 18 years old, I thought my mom and dad were the dumbest people in the world. When I was 21, I could not figure out how my mom and dad got so smart in just three years. You know what? I deceived myself. I thought I knew better than they did. It did not matter they had been through life. World War II. It did not matter they went through the depression. It did not matter they went without to make me give me. It did not matter that. All I saw was me. All I saw was somebody who thought to myself, "I know more about life than you did." You know what? Every young man, every young lady that gets messed up in life and goes into a disaster tailspin starts just like that. You know why? Because when the commandment came, sin will deceive you. A deception is not some grand deception. It is just something that you think somebody who knows more about life than you do, you know more about it than they do. That is how it happens. That is how it happens. You see,