

"Paul's Testimony As A Law-Keeper Is Still An Example For Us All"

Review: "Will We Be Slaves to Sin and Death or to Obedience and Righteousness?"

- ***The Logic of Grace Is Foundational In Practical Living As Well As Salvation***
- ***Though We Are Blessed By Grace, the Weakness of the Flesh Remains***
- ***Freedom From Righteousness Was Once Our Constant Condition***
- ***Freedom From Sin Is Now Our Constant Blessing!***

- ***The Logic of Grace Is Foundational In Practical Living As Well As Salvation***

Romans 6:14-15

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

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

- ***Paul continues the same teaching as in the earlier section but will repeat it with a somewhat different emphasis to further strengthen his argument. Apparently he expected many opponents then and in future times. Therefore he begins again with the word "for". This is divine logic indeed. No, Paul is not simply repeating himself according to his bold statement in verse 1?***

But the emphasis in verse 14 is that since we are not under law why not just commit acts of sin when the opportunity arises and it seems "convenient"? The difference from verse 1 here is actually somewhat significant. In the first case one might choose to live just as before one was saved and leave it at that with no further consideration — since our sin will magnify the depth of God's abundant grace toward believers.

That is a theological failure indeed made real in ones life. In the second case, while we have been set free from the bondage of sin through Christ, we now live under grace and sin therefore is passed over by our always gracious Lord. Therefore we might conclude that we may sin as opportunity allows, even though we know that is not the best course for us. This second of the two circumstances seem to me to be far more common than the first. And, I believe it is all too common in our lives.

- *Paul has asked the question and his answer follows:*
- *Though We Are Blessed By Grace, the Weakness of the Flesh Remains*

Romans 6:16-19

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

- *The indwelling sin nature, the flesh, is a constant presence and source of passions tending towards sin in the believer. Of that all must agree. But there is an alternative and the apostle here strongly exhorts based again as before on the liberty theme highlighted earlier.*
- *He also highlights in verse 17 with much thanksgiving to the Lord God that the believers to whom he writes had willingly and from the heart received the true doctrine regarding their gifts under grace. As a result they had presented themselves to righteousness and away from sin.*
- *And so he exhorts them again (since apparently he knew there was now a need for that), to fully exercise their privilege under grace to present their members as instrument so righteousness, not as previously when they were indeed enslaved to sin. For now, he writes, we believers are no longer slaves to sin. Why therefore should we now freely offer ourselves as such? May it never be so.*
- *Freedom From Righteousness Was Once Our Constant Condition*

Romans 6:20-21

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

- *The teaching of verse 19 is now restated in terms of “freedom” or “liberty”. LIBERTY is such a wonderful thought, isn’t it? Our founding fathers successfully exhorted many in the same way, didn’t they? Remember the call: “give me liberty or give me death” by Patrick Henry.*
- *Before we were NOT FREE regarding righteousness, but now we ARE. Why throw that away for nothing; so much has been gained through it. Indeed, the riches of God’s abundant grace are poured out upon us including also the new nature and the Holy Spirit. They are always with us as a result. So we have every advantage now compared to when we were in bondage as sin’s slaves. Why treat the great gift of God with such disrespect? Christ died for our liberty? Do we not remember that? This is a powerful argument indeed, isn’t it?*
- *That is a proper ending point and the apostle will now conclude by summarizing his teaching in the wonderful words that follow:*
- *Freedom From Sin Is Now Our Constant Blessing*

Romans 6:22-23

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

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

- *Let’s not forget the structure of the passage: Verse 14 begins this section and verses 22-23 conclude it. Remember what the apostle wrote there:*

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

- *Here “Made free from sin” means “liberated from the power and bondage of sin” , and “become servants to God” means “have freely become bond slaves to God” as I might paraphrase it.*
- *And verse 22 is here stated to be true of all believers, carnal and spiritual, immature and mature, just as verse 23 does also. The implications are that Paul is teaching about the benefits of God’s abounding grace in each of us. All of the negatives, the sins, under grace, have been cast aside.*

- *So we find ourselves here firmly planted on the high plain of God's abundant grace surrounded by high peaks of grace just waiting to be known even more fully as we live here so surrounded and with these constant reminders the apostle cannot withhold. Amen and amen.*

Our Outline Today: "Paul's Testimony As A Law-Keeper Is Still An Example For Us All"

- *An Analogy with the Mosaic Law Teaches Truth About the Law Today*
- *Our Nature of Sin Is Encouraged by Law But the Knowledge of Sin Results*
- *Paul's Full Knowledge of the Power of Sin Should Still Be Teaching Us!*

I. An Analogy with the Mosaic Law Teaches Truth About the Law Today:

[READ] Romans 7:1-4

1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

3 So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

- *Twice Paul makes this statement, here and also at the end of his long section about divorce and remarriage in 1 Cor. 7. The subject was an important one for him, clearly. Law applies only during the life of the one who is under it.*
- *The apostle is writing primarily here to those of Jewish heritage and verse makes that clear since no Gentile was ever under the law of Moses. Many in the Roman assembly were Jewish it seems. And he says here that they knew the law very well indeed.*
- *Verses 2 and 3 are an illustration of what Paul is teaching here though they do not represent an analogy technically, as the terms do not properly correspond.... But the teaching is that the Mosaic Law*

bound a woman to a man for life (as in “till death do us part”, common in Christian marriage services since 1549).

So the obvious conclusion the apostle intends here is that a marriage is not to be broken for it is sacred before the Lord God. The wife is bound to her husband for life — until he dies, at which point she is freed from the bondage or law of her husband and is free to marry again. But the text goes right on beyond this to the main teaching, which is all about what the previous chapters were teaching about the bond of all to Adam apart from Christ’s death for sin and sins, and then his glorious resurrection that alone could break that bond and set us free by our justification.

- ***This is stated so well in verse 4: By Christ’s death and resurrection we have been set free from our previous bondage to Adam and his sin and have now passed from death to life where “fruit”, not compliant words, are the focus. Praise God!***

But now the teaching reaches a deep subject indeed, but an important one, the relationship of law and sin dwelling in us still. For Paul this teaching is most important and it should be for us as well.

II. Our Nature of Sin Is Encouraged by Law But the Knowledge of Sin Results:

[READ] Romans 7:5-6

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

- ***He begins by stating affirmatively in verse 5 that there was a direct connection between Law and sins for Jews, clearly. It is not a positive comment at all. But the Old Testament reveals that in details that we may hardly read it without exclaiming, “who shall deliver me” as the apostle does near the end of the chapter.***
- ***Verse 6 is central now to his “argument”:* “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held ...”. ***As Paul teaches us in verse 4 after the analogy is applied to our current circumstances, our identity in Adam as his offspring and therefore as ones bearing his curse of sin and death has now ended, since we have a new identity in our risen savior, Christ Jesus. We are now in*****

Christ and no longer in Adam and that has made all of the difference.

III. Paul's Full Knowledge of the Power of Sin Should Still Be Teaching Us!

- *Verse 7 explains the dynamics of the reality we find dwelling in ourselves. That he chooses a member of the Ten Commandments is bold indeed, isn't it?*

[READ] Romans 7:7-14

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.

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

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

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

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

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

13 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.

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

- *Here we have the detailed teaching where apostle dives down to the depths regarding sin and its indwelling power. It is a very negative statement indeed with little positive teaching. The positive conclusion with the hope implied so strongly there is left to the end of the chapter, or, since there are no chapter divisions in the original, the introduction to chapter 8.*

He states much needed truth here regarding the fallen realm where the law works. After all, "the law works wrath" (Rom. 4:15), even in this case since it is God's Law, the Law worked wrath to those that were under it, the Jews. I thank God that in the Romans Paul makes this clear.

- *Verses 7 - 9 lay the foundation for the teaching in simply revealing his own experience beginning with his denial that the Law itself,*

whatever else it may be, is NOT sin. He then writes concerning what the Law actually is and how it worked in him — that he had no knowledge of lust until “the law said ‘thou shalt not covet.’ For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” Under that law operating in his life then, he testifies here that he began to possess a knowledge he did not have before and to know lust in a new way because the law had said “thou shalt not covet”. He also uses the words “the law came ...”.

Was this something Paul experienced before or after salvation, is a key question? All the evidence here in this extended description points us to a post-salvation experience. For he writes in verses 9 & 10: “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.” When was Paul alive apart from the Law, one must ask? Surely not as an unbeliever, since according to Galatians 3:12, “And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.” So Paul before he was saved was “living in the Law” and in no other way even though that law “killed” him, as it were and as the next verses explicitly declare with the wording: “For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.”

- **So what is Paul’s point here in this section? Simply put, it is that the Law, though given by God and therefore good and holy in itself, provided opportunity for the indwelling nature of sin to be emboldened therefore bringing rebellion against that Law and then judgment. So instead of life resulting it was death as demanded by that law.**
- **The problem was of course that the Law had been set aside and was no longer applicable to believers since it only had relevance while that connection to Adam remained. But now, under grace, all believers including Paul were delivered from the Law as written earlier in verse 4, “my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”**
- **So the bottom line is this. When Paul as a believer had placed himself back under law, then he had works leading to judgement by that law and not fruit in living. And that is true for all of us today.**

- ***Will we take God at his word? Or will we go back like Paul did to law and religious works for deliverance? Or will Paul be our guide to liberty and life.***

Our testimony !! As the apostle summarizes it here in these last verses:

[READ] Romans 7:24-25

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

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Conclusions / Exhortations: