

God's Holy Law

(Rom 7:12-13)

- Paul's context is the place of the Law of God in the life of the believer
- He is showing that the Law can neither justify nor sanctify

I. Rom 7:12

A) Summary

1. Rom 7:12- This is the summation of the question "is the Law sin?"
 - i. The present tense debunks what Dispensationalism often says about the Law
2. Paul's use of both "Law" and "commandment" reinforces James 2:10
 - i. He probably refers here to the 10th command in his experience
 - ii. It shows the deceitfulness of sin in that the commandment that most shows our true nature is the one most often ignored or bypassed

B) Terms

1. "Holy"- Complete opposite of sin (Paul being accused of saying the law is sin)
 - i. Law is an expression of God's holy character
 - a) Law defines God's will and desire for man
 - ii. Law defines what man must do to have fellowship with God
 - a) 1 Pet 1:16- "Be ye holy, for I am holy"
2. "Just"- Vindicated in all it demands, proper, fair, equal
 - i. Sin is always trying to convince us that the Law is unjust
 - ii. The Law is not only just in its demands, but also in its punishment
3. "Good"- Proper in all its purposes and its effects
 - i. The law is good for man in every way
 - a) It's good for his health
 - b) It's good for a joyful life
 - c) It's especially good because it makes us aware of our sin

II. Rom 7:13

A) "Can something that is holy, just and good murder?" Or "can something that kills you be good?"

1. V.13 is both a part of the summary and also an introduction to the next section
 - i. Rom 7:7-12- Law can't justify
 - ii. Rom 7:13-25- Law can't sanctify
 - a) V.13 answers Paul's question in v.7 as well as introduces an elaboration of his point

B) “The Law didn’t kill me, sin did!”

1. God allowed sin to do this work for a reason:

- i. So that sin would be seen for what it truly is
 - a) In the same way in which the devil prompted the crucifixion of the Lord, yet in doing so brought about his own defeat
 - 1) Sin’s use of the Law in the life of the elect is used by God to show the true nature of sin and bring about victory in the life of the believer
- ii. So that the malignity of sin would be known
 - a) Consider how sin used the Law to cause Israel to stumble
 - b) Consider how sin used the Law to crucify Christ
 - c) Consider how sin used the Law to blind Israel
 - d) Consider how sin uses the word of God today to cause people to reject their need of salvation
 - 1) The exceeding sinfulness of sin may be seen in the fact that the more a lost person knows about the scripture, the harder his heart becomes

C) 1 Tim 1:8- Proper use of Law

1. Rom 3:20- By the Law is a true understanding of sin’s effect upon me

i. Gal 3:19-24- The Law a schoolmaster to lead to Christ (the BEST THING!)

a) To use the law any other way is to misuse it, and a man must be brought to see this to be saved

1) Thus Rom 7:1-4- Divorced from the idea of “law-keeping” for righteousness

2) And then in Rom 7:14-25 Paul goes on to show that the same is true of the Law concerning the sanctification of the justified man

III. Paul’s examples in ch 7

A) Rom 7:7-12

1. Who is Paul referring to in this section?

i. Obviously himself, uses personal pronouns 9 times

ii. And the context demands that the same be true of the person spoken of in v.13-25

2. When was Paul in this condition?

i. Some say up to age 12, when he began to be taught the Law

a) Phil 3:6- Proves that can’t be the case (persecuting and blameless)

ii. Was it when Paul was saved or lost?

a) He is obviously referring to someone “under the law”

1) Rom 7:5- “In the flesh” is the same condition

2) Rom 8:9- They that are “in the flesh” are not saved

- (a) So Paul cannot mean this was his condition after justification
 - (b) Acts 9:17- Can't be when he's "filled with Spirit"
 - (1) Thus it can't be in Arabia
- 3) So Paul is referring to his being under the conviction of sin by the law in order to be soon converted
 - (a) A man can have a spiritual view of the Law and yet not yet know the truth about the sacrifice of Christ
 - (b) Notice Paul's verbs are all past tense in v.7-12, it was the case once, but no longer is
- iii. When prior to his justification could this mean? (all speculation)
 - a) Prior to Damascus Road experience? (Acts 9:5)
 - b) During 3 days prior to Ananias' coming?
 - 1) Acts 9:9- Doesn't eat or drink, this doesn't fit a man rejoicing in salvation
 - 2) Acts 22:16- "Wash away thy sins..."