

The School of Biblical Law
Introduction to Law and Grace
Lesson Forty: “Ordained to Life”

Paul’s words found in Romans 7:7-25 are a continuation of his treatise on the law and its effect on the man after Adam versus the new man in Christ. No man is free of the claims of the law upon his soul because God has so created all things, including mankind, to witness to His person and His ways. God’s testimony cannot be avoided (Rom. 1:19; 2:15). As has been declared, Jesus came to defeat sin and death, not to destroy the law. The continuing voice of the law has one effect on the non-covenant man and a differing effect on the covenant believer.

1. Romans 7:5, “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.” (KJV) “For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.” (ESV)

The law witnesses to God’s righteous standard. “For I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet.” (vs. 7)

Not only does law give knowledge of truth and arouse passions to do wrong, the law pronounces the death sentence upon the sins of man. (vs.9-11) Sin kills; the law does not kill.

2. Sin dwells in the man after Adam; sin does not dwell in the law.

Sin is an active principle in man’s nature due to Adam, but Adam’s sin was not his nature. Adam’s sin was a self-conscious act against God’s law and a self-conscious act of autonomy that represented a distrust in God’s law and a trust in his own will.

“Wherefore the law is holy, and commandment hold, and good.” (vs. 12) Law was given to Adam as the means of protecting and furthering Adam’s life in God. The Law is ordained to life (vs.10)

3. Paul completes his treatise begun in chapter 6 about the death and burial of the old man in Adam throughout verses 15-25 as he discusses the effect of the holy law in creating a conflict between the carnal and the spiritual in man.

Every atom in man (both saved and lost) witnesses to the truth of God, therefore all men who chose sin are at war within themselves.

“It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (vs. 17). Paul does not diminish man’s responsibility but says that sin diminishes man and depersonalizes him when it gains dominion over him.

To the decree that any man is a son of Adam, either completely because he is unregenerate or partially because he is not fully sanctified, he is under the dominion of that to which he yields his members.

What is the answer to the moral struggle in man that is excited or aroused by the law? “Oh wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (vs.24-25a)

“The power or law of God subjects us to life and freedom, and the power of law of sin subjects us to guilt and death. Because of this subjection, man has no autonomous freedom. In the state of innocence, man had the freedom to do good, but the possibility of sin. In the state of the fall or depravity, man is free from the good and is only capable of sin. In the state of grace, man is capable of sin, but his basic motive is to do good. In the state of glory, man can only do good, and is perfectly sanctified.” (Rushdoony, *Romans & Galatians*, pg. 120).