

SALT Church

Romans 7:1-6

“Motivation”

November 9, 2025

“The Greatest Book Ever Written”

David and Cindy

Paul’s goal for us today:

- Paul is answering the question “If it is true that we cannot (out sin God’s grace) because the more we sin the more He pours out His grace.
 - If that statement is true (and it is) then what motivates us not to sin?”
- We must keep in mind that the Jew had been taught since birth that keeping the Law was paramount.
- It was what was expected and was the only hope of ever being considered righteous before God.
- Now Paul comes along and says:
 - Righteousness is required for salvation and righteousness is only credited to those that believe upon salvation through Jesus Christ.
 - He points to Abraham who was credited with righteousness for believing God.

- He also points out that Abraham righteousness was credited prior to the Law or any religious act like circumcision.
- Chapters 5 and 6 point out God's amazing grace and justification through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.
- In these chapters we discovered that it is by faith alone, in Christ alone, that we are saved.
 - ***For us, we do not have an issue with this.***
 - This is the gospel that we heard and believed.
 - ***Unless you have come from a works-based faith which teaches that you must earn your salvation or that you could lose your salvation, you have no issue with what Paul has said through the power of the Holy Spirit.***
- One thing is for certain, the Roman Jews were struggling with what Paul had said and so he moves forward in his defense of the gospel by answering this most important question, “What is the motivation to pursue holiness if all our sins (past, present, and future) are forgiven.”
- We closed out chapter 6 last Sunday and I tried to help you see the connection between our treasure and the truth.
 - Meaning, that the most treasured thing in our life must be the Truth.
 - **Here was the truth that we agreed upon last week:**
 - We (before Christ) were prisoners of sin, and the warden (the Law) made sure we stayed locked in our prison cell.
 - Jesus came and set us free.

- At 1st we loved our freedom but, in our freedom, we discovered that we didn't know what to do.
- So, we returned to our old way of life, (we returned to our old prison cell)
 - This is what happens when new Christians are not disciplined.
- Paul's solution was to remember the truths of your salvation:
 - ***“The wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ”***
 - Sin used to be your master but now you have a new master Jesus Christ.
 - But even Christians can disobey their master and if we do, death will surely come.
 - But if we obey our new master righteousness will surely come.
 - We closed by pointing out that if Jesus is your treasure it will show up in your life as obedience.
 - Not begrudging submission but a true act of love.

Paul continues in this train of thought as he presses in on the motivation of the child of God.

Romans 7:1-6

7 Now, dear brothers and sisters—you who are familiar with the law—don't you know that the law applies only while a person is living?

- I struggled with this sentence.
- Here's why, isn't a lie a lie whether it in death or life?
 - That is a true statement.
 - Satan lied but Satan is an eternal being. (he cannot die)
 - We die or at least our bodies do but we know our souls continue on.
 - So, if we lie after we die is it not a lie?
 - It is.
 - So, what does Paul mean when he says the Law only applies to a living person?
 - ***The Law is the convicting force of the living. (What does that mean?)***

When we die, we are taken before the judge to determine our eternity.

- If we are children of God, the Bible says we will be like Jesus.
 - Meaning sinless, therefore the Law has no power over us.
- If we are children of Satan, we are carried to Hades (the place of the dead) to await final judgement.
 - There we wait but no further evidence will be needed as we will be convicted by the Law that was broken during our lifetime.
 - Therefore, the Law only applies to the living.

With this out of the way we move on:

7 Now, dear brothers and sisters—you who are familiar with the law, don't you know that the law applies only while a person is living?

2 For example, when a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, the laws of marriage no longer apply to her.

- Simple to understand (so far, so good)

3 So while her husband is alive, she would be committing adultery if she married another man. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law and does not commit adultery when she remarries.

- Simple enough (So far, so good)
 - **But what is the point?**

4 So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ.

- That is a powerful statement.
 - The Law, which still exist has no power over you.
 - It is as if the Christian has diplomatic immunity as it relates to sin.
 - Why do we have diplomatic immunity?
 - Because we have died.
 - ***Do you understand that death is the only way to break free from the bondage of sin and the Law?***
 - We either die a physical death or we die to self in Jesus Christ.
 - That is why we baptize.

- It symbolically says I have died to my old self and have been raised to a new life in Jesus.
- Therefore, since I died, the Law is no longer the warden over my life.

4 So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ.

And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God.

- What does that mean?
- How does dying to the power of the Law produce anything but more sinning?
 - ***The key is “dying with Christ means being united with Christ.”***
 - So, what does it mean to be united with Christ?
 - This is the key to understanding why we disciple people.

Too often we stop at the gospel.

- The gospel is the beginning of the discipleship journey.
 - It is in discipleship that we discover the treasure of God’s Word.
 - This changes our desires without effort like losing our sense of taste and smell we no longer crave the smell and taste for sinful things.
 - Instead, we crave the good fruit that comes from the very Word of God.

- This becomes true worship which comes in Spirit and Truth.

Paul continues:

5 When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death.

- How does the law arouse our evil desires?
 - Perhaps this is a translation issue.
 - This is basically what the Greek says, *“For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.”* (LSB)

Before Christ, we were slaves to a sinful and depraved mind.

- Meaning we were drawn to sin like a moth to a light bulb.
- When we heard that the Law said some action was sin, we were compelled or motivated to the very thing that the Law said was sin.
 - It was exciting
 - And it clearly placed us on the throne of our lives.
 - We were our masters, so we thought.
 - But the truth is we were not our masters.
 - We were slaves to sin; the evidence was our inability to stop sinning.
 - This was before Christ.
 - Before we became a new creation.
 - Before we became children of God.

Back to Romans 7:6

6 But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power.

Okay Pastor, what does it mean to be released from the law?

- It means that our hearts have been changed.
- It means that our motivation has been changed.
- It means our focus has changed.

Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law,

- Why is this statement a true statement?
- **The Law cannot exercise authority over a dead person.**
 - **We are dead to sin and the Law but alive in Christ.**

but in the new way of living in the Spirit.

- What does this look like?
 - It is my hope to answer this question next week but allow to point to what it looks like immediately in the newly converted.

I want to draw your attention to an adulteress since Paul used marriage as an example of how the Law works.

- In John 4 Jesus is traveling through Samaria, a route that most Jews would have never taken.
- He takes this route because He has a divine appointment with a woman who is religious but currently sits on the throne of her life.
- She has made many mistakes, and the Law has pointed out her many sins.

- This is why she has come to the well in the heat of the day and not early in the morning when all the other women come.
 - She is ashamed and in need of forgiveness.

John 4

⁴Now he (Jesus) had to go through Samaria. ⁵So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

⁷When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" ⁸(His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

⁹The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

¹⁰Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

- She has no idea that she is standing before God in the flesh.
- She has no idea what she thirsts for, only He can provide.
 - But He knows and she is exactly why He has come to this place and point in time.

¹¹"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? ¹²Are you

greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?”

¹³ Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. **Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”**

¹⁵ The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

¹⁶ He told her, “Go, call your husband and come back.”

¹⁷ “I have no husband,” she replied.

Jesus said to her, “You are right when you say you have no husband. **¹⁸ The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.”**

- There it is, her secret sin is out.
- Her shame has been exposed.
- So, what does she do?
 - Confess, repent, NOT YET

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.”

- She deflects by talking about religion to the author and perfecter of our faith.
 - Jesus corrects her theology as He does with everyone who comes to Him.

²¹ “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

- What is Jesus saying?
 - He is saying the same thing that Paul will say later in Romans 7.
 - You are so concerned with keeping the rules of worship.
 - So concerned with what is happening on the outside thinking that the change that must occur will be changed from the outside in.
 - The change comes from within and it changes the outside.

²⁵ The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

²⁶ Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

²⁷ Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

²⁸ Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, ²⁹ “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” ³⁰ They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

³¹ Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.”

32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

33 Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?”

- They do not understand what is really going on either.

34 “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

- In other words, He was motivated not by what was outside (food) but rather what motivated Him was what was inside.
 - What was inside that motivated Jesus?

▪ His never-ending love for The Father.

So, what have we learned today?

- **The Law cannot exercise authority over a dead person.**
 - **We are dead to sin and the Law but alive in Christ.**

So, what motivates a Christian to not sin but keeps us from becoming legalistic?

- Our motivation is His motivation; we are motivated to pursue holiness because of our love for The Father.

Like the Samaritan woman we longed for living water and He came to us.

- He didn't sweep our sin under the rug; He confronted us with our sin.
- We confessed and repented (turned away from our sin)
- We found His offer of forgiveness to be irresistible and we drank the living water.
- Now He is our reason for living

- His love is our motivation for not sinning.
- And although we know that we no longer live under the condemnation of the Law we respect the Law.
 - We understand that the Law is good and the Law protects.
 - And in the Law we no longer see Gods wrath but rather we see God's heart of love.
 - His heart for the lost sinner who has no hope unless Jesus comes to the well of our heart and pours out living water.