Sermon Highlights

The Law, Sin, and the Deliverance Found in Christ

Summary:

Drawing from Romans 7:12-25, this sermon examines the purpose of God's law, the nature of sin, and the human inability to achieve righteousness through personal effort. Pastor Bruce Gordon emphasizes that the law was never intended as a checklist for earning God's favor, but rather as a spiritual mirror that exposes the depth of human sinfulness. Just as Christ reinterpreted the law beyond its outward observance to its inward spiritual demands, so believers must reckon honestly with their own moral failure. The sermon stresses that no person, through fleshly effort alone, can please God or overcome sin. True deliverance comes only through Jesus Christ, and the Christian life is a continual battle between the inward spiritual man and the outward sinful nature, a battle won only by yielding to the Spirit of God.

Key Points:

- The law of God is holy, just, and good, and was never the problem; rather, sin uses the law to expose human guilt and the impossibility of self-righteousness

- The law functions spiritually, not merely as an external code; Christ demonstrated this by showing that sins such as murder and adultery are committed first in the heart before any outward act occurs

- Every person is born condemned as a descendant of Adam and compounds that guilt through personal sin, making all people criminals in the sight of God, not merely sinners in an abstract sense

- Self-deception is a grave danger; individuals and societies can become so morally darkened that they no longer recognize gross sin for what it is

- No good thing dwells in the flesh of man in terms of the ability to please God; every human effort toward righteousness apart from Christ is rooted in some form of self-interest or vainglory

- The pattern of committing, failing, and recommitting to moral improvement without surrendering to Christ mirrors the error of the Pharisees, who added layer upon layer to the law rather than acknowledging their inability to keep it

- Paul's cry of "O wretched man that I am" represents the necessary posture of humility and surrender that precedes genuine usefulness to God

- Deliverance from the body of sin comes through Jesus Christ alone; the believer's ongoing responsibility is to yield increasingly to the inward spiritual man and less to the outward fleshly nature

- The old sinful nature remains with the believer until death or the rapture, meaning the Christian life is an unceasing warfare, but one in which the indwelling Spirit guarantees victory for those who yield to Him

Scripture Reference:

- Romans 7:12-25, in which Paul declares the law holy and good, confesses the war between the spiritual and fleshly natures within himself, and gives thanks for deliverance through Jesus Christ

Stories:

- The account of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is referenced to illustrate how the prohibition of something naturally intensifies human desire for it; God's single restriction regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil produced in Adam and Eve a longing for precisely what was forbidden, demonstrating the innate inclination of the human heart to want what it cannot or should not have

- Pastor Bruce Gordon draws on the example of children being told what they cannot do, noting that instructions about permitted activities are largely ignored while prohibitions immediately attract curiosity and desire, illustrating the same principle of human nature seen in the Garden

- The practice of certain strict religious traditions requiring women to wear full veils is mentioned as an example of misunderstanding the law of God; the attempt to prevent lust by removing visual temptation fails because it does not address the condition of the heart, which is the true source of sin