

Rev. Lex DeLong / General Adult

Romans Road to Recovery / Sin / Romans 7:7–12

Notes

09/21 Rom. 7:7-12, "Sin is sin," Subtitle: The Law is our teacher, Scripture: Gal. 3:21-24

Join us in person this Sunday at 10:30 or follow along online live as we consider the relationship between the Law and sin, and how it benefits us.

Jerry Bridges in his book "Respectable Sins" states, "We don't become saints by our actions. We are made saints by the immediate supernatural action of the Holy Spirit alone who works this change deep within our inner being so that we do, in fact, become new creations in Christ (see 2 Corinthians 5:17)." Jerry Bridges, *Respectable Sins*. (Navpress Pub Group, 2007), 4.

It was observed by Psychiatrist Karl Menninger by 1973 that, "The very word "sin," which seems to have disappeared, was once a proud word. It was once a strong word, an ominous and serious word....But the word went away. It has almost disappeared—the word, along with the notion. Why? Doesn't anyone sin anymore? Doesn't anyone believe in sin?"

Karl A. Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?*, Ecclesia Books (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975).

Tragically, the concept of sin among many conservative Christians has been refined in our culture to point only to gross sins. Many Christians have now so minimized the very concept of sin that their awareness of personal sin has all but disappeared from their conscience. As Jerry Bridges said and our text today confirms, "But it has not disappeared from the sight of God."

The Bible clearly teaches that Sin is sin, any sin, no matter how significant or minute that sin might be, it is still sin. Many of us fall into the trap of categorizing our sins by degrees of offense, justifying the "little ones" as innocuous and not worth our attention or concern. We go as far as to even justify them.

For this very reason, God has revealed Himself to us through His Law throughout Scripture. Apart from faith in Jesus Christ, we are so dead that we cannot even see our sin, that is how dead we are. However, just as tragic, once we have been made alive in Christ, without continually being reminded of our need for Christ throughout every day, we risk failing to acknowledge that sin when we engage in it or wrongfully justifying it to the point of ignoring it.

Today's passage in Rom. 7:7-13 explains to us clearly why the Law is so important, for both the one outside of Christ and for the children of God. For these reasons God has given us His Law—for it to be our teacher. When it comes to the Law, humanity continually tries to make the law an instrument of self-improvement or salvation rather than a teacher of righteousness. Doing so dilutes the nature of sin and fails to acknowledge that all sin is indeed, an offense to our holy God.

Paul writes this section of his letter to the Romans using two rhetorical questions.

First, if we must first die to the rule of the Law over us (Rom. 7:1-6), "is then the Law itself sin?"

The Second rhetorical question Paul asks is, "if the Law reveals sin that leads to death, then does the Law cause death for me (Rom. 7:13)?"

In answer to each of these questions, Paul unequivocally and emphatically answers the same to both questions, "May it never be."

Come with me as we consider these two questions and Paul's reason for his answer to them. Once we understand the purpose of the Law, we can come to the point of being taught by it.

Paul's first question, if we must first die to the rule of the Law over us (Rom. 7:1-6), "is then the Law itself sin?" "May it never be." You see—

The Law is not Sinful, We Are (Rom. 7:7-12)

- The Law makes sin recognizable (v. 7)
- ++The more we are told "no," the more we **want** it ("covet," v. 8)
- ++The more we sin, the more we are deceived by it (vv. 9-11)
- ++The Law is holy, righteous, and good, but we are not (v. 12)

So then, the Law is not Sinful, We are

But then, Paul asks, if the Law is not sinful, is it the cause of our destiny to die? "May it never be."

The Law Does Not Cause Death, We Do (Rom. 7:13)

- Our sin yields a harvest of death
- ++The darker the death of sin, the clearer the goodness of the Law
- ++See all sin as sin

John Newton said, "I am a great sinner, but I have a great Savior." Jerry Bridges continued the thought, "That is my only hope. That is the only remedy for my sin, and it is your only remedy as well."

Let the Law teach you that all your sin is sin, whether big or small, all sin offends God. If at any time, for whatever reason, we minimize the darkness of even the smallest of sins, we break God's holy Law and we offend the King of glory.

Let the words of the familiar hymn, "Rock of Ages," ring out light church bells on a Sunday morning:

Let the water and the blood,
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and Power.