

Conformed to His Image

by Manley Beasley

The sermon explores the transformative power of understanding Romans 7 in the life of a believer, highlighting the struggle between good intentions and the reality of sin, and the role of the Holy Spirit in achieving victory through faith.

Duration: 27:55

Scripture: Exodus 13:21-22, Exodus 14:19-22, Exodus 16:13-15, Deuteronomy 8:4, Romans 7:4

Topics: "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the message of Romans 7 in the life of a believer who wants to trust God. He uses the examples of Moses and Abraham to illustrate how it took them many years to learn the message of Romans 7. Once they understood this message, the message of Romans 8 fell into place for them. The speaker also shares a story about a newly saved girl who read about the Israelites' experiences with God and how it inspired her to have faith in God's ability to provide and protect.

Transcript

If you have your Bibles, turn with me please to Romans the 7th chapter. This particular portion of scripture, to me, has been used so many times, so many times. I've discovered myself here so many times.

I conclude really, I have definitely concluded that out of all the learning, by human understanding and by divine revelation, the heart of the truth that a man must learn is this message out of the 7th chapter of the Book of Romans. I believe if he does not discover the message of Romans 7, he would definitely end up in defeat. Not way down the road, but immediately.

When I look at the men of God that God used, especially in the Old Testament, like Moses and Abraham, those two in particular, I see that the truth that's mentioned preceding the 7th chapter of the Book of Romans, there was no problem with God giving these men victory in those areas. But when it comes to the truth of men learning how to walk with God and accomplish God's end and have victory over, not the old man in the sense of wickedness, but the good man in the sense of man in his goodness, I find that it took God 40 years to get Moses to learn the message of Romans 7. 40 years. It took God 20 years to get Abraham to learn the message of Romans 7. And once they learned the message of Romans 7, it seems that the message of Romans 8 just fit into place, the message of Romans 9 fit into place.

The reason I'm saying this is for this reason. Romans 7 will play a unique part in the life of a believer that wants to trust God. Now, the Book of Romans is a very unusual book.

Of course, all the Bibles are unusual. It's made up of unusual books. But this particular book, Romans, is so unusual because of this.

The Holy Spirit is the author. But the man that the Holy Spirit is using is Paul. And as the Holy Spirit writes through Paul, he is allowing Paul to unravel his life from the beginning to the end, especially his Christian experience.

And we just look in on a man's life as he's facing all the different facets of the Christian life. And we have him as his life is opened before us, and we see all of his weaknesses, we see all of his strength, we see where he got his strength from, and we see how he learned to have victory in the Lord. And it's just beautiful.

And we see him in this progressiveness. And here in Romans, you have a progressive revelation. Like in the first five chapters of the Book of Romans, you're talking about a man getting saved.

And in Romans 6, you're talking about a man getting filled with the Spirit, discovering his position in Christ, and by faith getting filled with the Spirit to walk with the Lord. But in Romans 7, after a man is filled with the Spirit, we find Paul is learning how to cooperate with God, to accomplish God's end, to work with God, how to bear fruit, how to be a productive Christian, how to be an overcoming Christian in every kind of circumstances. And then, of course, in Romans 8, we enter into that beautiful Spirit walk.

And so we come back with this message of Romans 7. Now, if a man's salvation, if a man's salvation experience is all there is to it, then Paul would have been telling us a little story. He would have not been telling us the truth when he said in Romans 7, 18, that he had the desire, the wish to be able to do the will of God, but he didn't know how to do it. And so salvation doesn't settle the whole issue.

If being filled with the Spirit, you know, if you just get a man filled with the Spirit, then that settles the whole issue. If that would have settled the whole issue, Romans 6 would have settled the issue with Paul, and he would not have been able to say in Romans 7, I do not know how to perform. Now, here in Romans 7, after a man has been saved, after a man has been filled with the Spirit of God, he is still saying in Romans 7, 18, he said, the desire to do the will of God, the desire to do what God wants me to do is with me, but how? He said, I find not.

I find not. He said, the good that I want to do. And that following two verses, he said, the good that I want to do, he said, he said, you know, I find myself coming up short.

Now, of course, you realize this is my paraphrase of those verses. And some people I know today can put out theirs. I certainly can give a little suggestion as to mine, go along a little ways.

And so he says, the evil that I do not want to do, he said, that I find myself doing. And by the way, can you identify with this fellow right here? Oh, you can. Amen.

Boy, that, that was a, hey, I'm, I'm so glad for the honesty tonight. We may get someplace. Amen.

All right. I do know some folk like that. And in case you don't know someone, if you really don't know a man like this fellow I'm talking about, he's having the desire within him to do the things that God wants him

to do and the good that he wants to do, he finds himself coming short.

And the evil that he does not want to do, he finds himself doing that. We're not talking about a wicked, ungodly vulgar man. We're talking about a good man.

I'm talking about a good man, a man that really loves the Lord in trouble, trying to do what he knows he should do, trying not to do what he knows he shouldn't do. And friends, he is absolutely in trouble. And he said, I just don't know how.

Boy, he sure was honest, wasn't he? Amen. And I believe because of this, God was able to do it. Now, if you don't know a fellow like this, I'll tell you what you do.

You just stick out your left hand and reach over with your right and shake because friend, I got news for you. God knows a person like this and he knows it's every one of us. Now, I want to share with you this truth.

This truth relates to faith because this truth gives us the basis by which God works with man. And of course, I have been in this area all this time as I've talked to you about faith. Now, I want to read the fourth verse of the seventh chapter to you.

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God. Now, you notice as I read that, as I read that out of the New American Standard translation, I'm sorry I switched translations on you tonight, but that particular verse has some very deep significance. And this particular translation is uniquely correct, I believe, at this point in such a beautiful way.

And I want you to see it. I want to read it again. Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God.

Now, if you want to, you might look at the first three verses preceding this fourth verse and realize that the Lord is talking here in a parable through this dear brother as he writes. And he's talking about the parable of a woman being married to a man, and she's bound to that man as long as he lives. And then when he dies, she's free from that man.

And of course, with that parable in mind, then he goes on and tells us that if she's married to one man, living with another, then she's in adultery. And he ends up with that fourth verse. And that fourth verse brings us to the place of giving us some understanding about the predicament that Paul was in in this chapter.

And so I want you to listen carefully and pray that the Lord will speak to our hearts as we go into this chapter. The best way I believe that we can go into this chapter is just approach it just like it's put here. Here's a woman.

Here's a woman that hears the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when she hears the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, she realizes that she is a sinner. And as she realizes that she is a sinner, she wants to be saved.

And so she starts trying to get saved. And so she starts attending church. And so she gets so active in church attendance that she's not only attending preaching services, she's even going to Sunday school, church training, and even Wednesday night meetings.

Now let me ask you a question. Can this woman, by all of this church attendance, can she get peace in her heart? Oh, she can't. You mean by trying all of this good works, she can't make it? Oh, well, she gets a little better than that.

She hears about giving, and so she starts giving. Now she's going to church and giving her money. She still doesn't get peace.

Well, she even does a little better than that. She has some habits that's wrong, and so she quits some of them. She can't quit.

And so she quits some of her habits, and now she's cleaned up a little bit. Now she's going to church, she's giving her money, and she's living a good life. You know what? She still doesn't have peace.

Do you have any idea why she doesn't have peace? How do you get peace? How do you really get peace with God? How do you get peace with the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, she goes a little further. She tries to read the Bible, and she can't understand it. Now she's reading the Bible, she's going to church, she's giving her money, she's living a good life, she's trying her best to make it.

And friends, the more she tries, the more she fails, and the more she fails, the more she tries. And this is this woman. And one day, in a state of desperation, boy, she's done all she knows to do.

She throws up her hands and says, Oh God, if I go to hell, I'm going to have to go to hell. I can't stand this any longer. And that preacher says, Jesus saves.

And somehow the Holy Spirit just takes the Word and opens to her heart, like the Spirit opened Lydia's heart, and that Jesus is the Savior. And friends, I mean here she comes. Without reservation, sink or swim, live or die, whatever it takes, I'm coming home.

And friends, here she comes to Jesus. She doesn't know all there is to know, but she knows she's a sinner. She can't make it any further, and she knows Jesus is the Savior.

So she turns to Him. You know what happens, right? She gets saved. But now we're still in that fourth verse.

She becomes one with the Lord. The Lord is her Lord. And she becomes one with the Lord.

She knows she's a wicked sinner. She knows that Jesus is her Savior. She's wobbly about what she feels, because what she feels is determined a great deal by what she knows.

And yet, my dear friend, she's aware that she's nothing and He's everything, and it's His. She walks out by the preacher. She says some very small words for a big person, but when you get saved, you know, you don't always have the words right.

And she walks out by the preacher and says, you know, I'm the most wicked person in the world. I don't understand how Jesus could love me, but I know tonight He gave me peace in my heart, and I know Him. And I may fail before I get home, but if I do, I'll fail, trusting the Lord.

And she goes home, and friend, she hasn't been taught a thing about soul winning, about reading your Bible. She hasn't been taught a thing about church attendance. She hasn't been taught a thing about the laws of God.

But friend, right there, when she met Jesus, the Bible indicates that across the table of her heart, the laws of God were written. And friend, she goes home. She's waiting for a husband to come in about midnight.

She turns on the television, and that thing just doesn't make sense at all. She turns on, she turns over to her novel that she's been reading, and that novel just doesn't help her at all. So the Bible was there, and she said, you know, I haven't been able to understand that Bible, but I'll try.

And she opens that Bible up, and the next thing, the door, she knows the doorbell's ringing. It's her husband. He's at the door.

A couple hours has passed. Tears has just been screaming down her face. For friends, out of almost every word, the living Lord just spoke to her heart.

I mean, that book became the living word of God. And so amazing. I mean, the word is so real.

Got to the door to let him in. She didn't have to tell him something had happened to her. Friends, he saw her, and he knew it.

And he said, my. She said, yes sir, I met him. And she hadn't even had a study course on the fact she's supposed to win Saul.

She was bubbling over with Jesus. Friends, she was so full of Jesus, she couldn't stand it. And if she hadn't told him about Jesus, she'd have popped.

I mean, friends, she was just so full of Jesus. Went into the breakfast the next morning. Kids were all there, you know.

Mama was fixing breakfast for the kids, and the, and she says, kids, mama met Jesus last night. One of the little old characters said, huh. Said, I wonder what meeting Jesus means.

But I want you to know, after a couple of days, that little boy knew what meeting Jesus meant. It did not only affect him, even the cat and the dog knew what meeting Jesus was. Because meeting Jesus, my dear friends, meant Jesus was not only the Lord, Savior of her soul, but friends, he was the controller of her simple life.

And he had spirit. He had controlled her body and life and circumstances to the, to the degree that she wasn't screaming and she wasn't being impatient and unkind and losing her temper. And I mean, friends, she had spirit control.

And don't you think for a moment that crowd didn't know what meeting Jesus meant. Amazing thing about this woman too, is she has, she had a neighbor and I imagine most of you have neighbors, but her neighbor was an enemy, wicked, ungodly, devilish woman. And do you know that woman changed that night after she got saved? Of course, you know who changed, don't you? That night when this girl got saved, she went and saw that lady the next day out in the backyard and she didn't love her ways, but she sure did love her.

Amen. She really loved that gal. And I mean, she really had love in her heart.

That's amazing. Their postman came by as an old friend and she couldn't wait. She hadn't tell him about Jesus.

She just told John, friend, I met Jesus. That boy started squalling and bawling. He got saved and her husband had gotten saved.

She got, he got saved. She went to the church house and she was waiting for the janitor to open the door so she could get in. Well, I mean, she, all that's happened to this gal, she just got saved.

Isn't that glorious? And another thing, preacher, preacher about giving mentioned something about 10% and she punches the lady next to her and said, what does that mean? She said, well, it means you're supposed to give 10%. She said, my Lord, is that all you're supposed to give? Said, I've been giving everything I can get my hands on and said, boy, the Lord has just been blessing me. I've never been blessed like I'm blessed right now.

I said, boy, is that all you're supposed to get? Well, this girl was having a great time. And all that had happened to her was she simply got saved. Friends, can you remember those days when you first met Jesus? You're so full of God.

You were so full of compassion. You were so full of love. You were so full of faith.

Boy, you know, this girl went to the church and they had a business meeting and they've been sitting back there figuring on a budget. Had their little old computers out, you know, going to help God out. And, uh, I don't know how you can help somebody out who's already helped out.

What you need to do is get helped. Not God. Here they are working on the budget and they come out there and oh my, I just, we just can't figure out how we're going to do it.

Poor little old God is that's what to say. This old girl, she just, she just got saved and she'd been reading the Bible and the amazing thing about it. She read about where the Israelites got ahold of God.

God got ahold of them and let them out with a cloud by day and a fire by night. And he, and he so blessed them that they didn't even have to change clothes for 40 years. No shoe change issue.

I mean, the shoes grew with the feet and all brother. Amen. Oh Lord.

That's in the Bible. Oh, one time the devil got after him pretty heavily and the Lord sent angels down to screw the nuts off of the chariot wheels, keep the devil's cloud from catching them. Oh Lord.

I'll tell you, she got the, she said, listen, you say God can't do this and we can't do this. She said, I've been reading about God's people who had a cloud by day and a fire by night. God opened up the red sea, sent angels down to screw nuts off the chariot wheels, fed them with manna from heaven, fed them well with heaven from heaven and gave them clothes that they didn't have to change for 40 years.

And boy, she just started magnifying God and the bigger God get the more, got the more that preacher got stirred up and more couple of those deacons got stirred up. And boy, do you know that night they had revival in that business meeting? Why? Because a little old girl had just got saved, didn't know she should keep her mouth shut. And she just kept magnifying Jesus.

And boy, I mean, blew that bunch out of there. They got, they loved God, but they were just dead. And boy, she got them stirred up and they got to believe in God.

Not fooling with this thing like human beings, got fooling with that thing like God's beings. And that's more than a human being. Amen.

I'm glad it's not angelic, but I'm glad it's different than normal people. And so she just so thrilled, man, Jesus real this girl. Well, six months passed.

Or let's go on to a year past, a year past. And one of the workers in the church came to this lady and said, we need some workers. And said, we've been watching you and we have noticed that there's been 60 people baptized in this church as a direct result of your life.

And we believe that you're qualified to take a class. Now let me tell you something, this girl has just been saved and she's only been saved a year and she's an immature child of God. And she doesn't know the things about God.

She's just a baby in the Lord. And I want you to notice how the strategy of Satan unravels in this girl's life and deceives her in and to backsliding on God and to unbelief really. This girl, this man says, listen, we know you qualify.

And he starts bragging on all that she's accomplished and all she's worth and what a great job they believe she can do. How many times do we get up and compliment each other like that when our Savior never gave us that to do? Amen. Brother, I'll tell you, Jesus doesn't brag on the flesh.

Right. Now Jesus responded to the spirit and not the flesh. And then he said, she said, well, I'm sorry, sir.

She said, you see, I know that I just can't do the job. And she didn't know she couldn't do the job, but what she didn't know, she didn't know that Jesus could do the job by her obedience. That's what she didn't know.

But no one sat down and taught her that. They said, get saved, get saved and try your best. Well, how should she know this truth? Right? I don't know if they even really said, try your best.

You don't have to tell the person to do that that got any gumption at all. They know you ought to try your best. That all lets you know it's wrong.

You say, why? Because that's what you normally do. And what you normally do is normally wrong. Amen.

So here she goes. And he says, listen, she says, she said, well, I just can't do it. He says, now, listen.

He said, I know you can do it. I know you can. But since you don't know you can, said, so let me tell you a few things.

He said, I didn't want to tell you this, but I will. She said, he said, we have tried to get a lady to teach those kids and we couldn't. And said, I'll tell you, it's like this.

If you don't take that class, those poor kids won't have a teacher. Now you can't get more, much more low down than that. Now see, he has moved from pride, bragging on her, to now pulling on her sympathy.

Amen. Poor kids. Well, you know what? She got over that hump.

She said, sir, I'm sorry. I can't do it. Well, praise the Lord for that.

She got over that one. But then he gave her one that she couldn't handle. He gave her one she couldn't handle.

He said, I'll tell you what. You say you can't do it. Okay.

You say you won't do it. Let me tell you. He says, ma'am, I'll tell you what you do.

If you will go in that class and try your best, that's all God expects out of you. And that's all we expect out of you. And said, if you will just go in that class and try your best, he says, that'll be it.

We will be satisfied. Now let me ask you something. Who in the world can cope with humanism on that level? Can you? Huh? But I want you to know that philosophy of a child of God going in and trying their best.

And you say, why did you say philosophy? That's what it is. It's not the word of God. Amen.

Because friend, your best and my best is nothing in this world, but filthy rags. And here was humanism at its best. Ma'am, if you'll just go in there and try your best, that's all God expects out of you.

And that's all we expect out of you. And if you, then you can't do it. Okay.

Now I want you to know you would have to be a spiritual person to be able to cope with such deception as that. If I walked up to you tonight and made that kind of proposition to you, and if you walked up and made that kind of proposition to me, I would have to be full of God and knowledgeable of the things of God to respond on a Christian level. I'd have to respond to you in the flesh just like this girl did.

She said, well, sir, if that's all you expect, while anyone can try their best, I'll do, I'll try my best. And she goes out of the church that night, not realizing that she's committed one of the most awful sins that a child of God can commit. And she's committed it right in the church house, right in the church house.

And the amazing thing about it, she has committed it for doing the work of God. Boy, she goes out, she says, pastor, they've talked me into taking a class and they've promised me that if I would go in that class and try my best, that that's all God expected. And that's all you expect.

The church expected and said, I want you to pray for me. I'm going to go and try my best.

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