

(Romans) God's Gateway to Godly Living - Part 2

by Willie Mullan

Willie Mullan explores the themes of justification, sanctification, and the believer's relationship to the law in Romans 7, emphasizing the importance of living a godly life through faith in Christ.

Duration: 1:07:54

Scripture: Matthew 19:3-9, Romans 3:19-24, Romans 6:1-4, Romans 6:12-14, Romans 8:1-4, Titus 2:11-12

Topics: "Godly Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the concept of vocation and living for God. He begins by emphasizing the importance of presenting oneself as a servant of the living God. The preacher then moves on to discuss the idea of unification with Christ, specifically in relation to the law. He explains that the law reveals our sinful urges and exposes our need for God's grace. The sermon concludes with an analogy of a married woman who not only claims to be married but also actively works for her spouse, highlighting the commitment and dedication required in our relationship with God.

Transcript

We're turning to Romans again this evening, and we're at chapter 7 tonight. This great, mighty, wonderful letter of Paul to the Romans, and we're at chapter 7 this evening, and we're going through the first 13 verses tonight, very carefully, because this is one of the great chapters in Romans. Now, I think that I must put you over what's gone before very quickly, of course, because I want the young believers here to get a grip of this great letter, and I believe if you get a grip of it, and it gets a grip of you, that your life will never be the same again.

I think you remember this, that in chapters 1 and 2, and the first 20 verses of chapter 3, we see that Paul pulls out all the stops to bring the whole world any guilty before God. If ever you want to prove that all have sinned and come forth of the glory of God, then you immediately turn to these early chapters of Romans. In the first chapter, you can see the depth of the cesspool of sin and iniquity that man really sank into.

Don't you remember how he proved that even self-righteousness is a filthy rag in the eyes of a holy God? When he dealt with the religious Jew, who was only a Jew outwardly, and when he got the Gentiles and the self-righteous man and the religious Jew, then he brings in the law, and whatsoever the law says stops every mouth, and the whole world becomes guilty before God. So we've just dribbled over those chapters,

the condemnation of sinners. You've got that in your mind.

And then starting at verse 21 in the third chapter, going right through that chapter, and all chapter four and all chapter five, he brings in the great subject, justification by faith alone. This is the Protestant doctrine, that even men who had got into the depths of the cesspool of iniquity, the grace of God had provided a salvation that brought them in justified before a holy God through faith alone in Jesus Christ. And do you remember how he came to the conclusion in that chapter four? He concluded that we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

It's justification by faith alone. And so you write over the first three the condemnation of sinners, and you write over the next three the justification of believers. Then starting at chapter six, going right through six, right through seven, right through eight, we're looking these nights at the sanctification of faith.

You see, when God calls men out of darkness, out of the first three chapters, or two and a half if you like, and he brings them into this wonderful standing of justification, do you know he wants them to live for himself then? Because the grace that saves us is the grace that teaches us that benign on godliness and worldly love we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world. And so that's what we're not listening to this evening and these evenings. We're looking at this practical sanctification for justified believers.

And in chapter six and right through seven and then into eight, we're finding great ways that lead us into godly living. That's what I've entitled these chapters, God's Gateways to Godly Living. Can I go through the gateways again we've passed by? Do you remember Romans six and we went from one to ten? And that is what we called the first gateway.

It was identification with Christ. You see, true believers, they look back to the cross. And they really believe that when Jesus died, they died.

They really believe that when he was buried, they were buried. And that when he rose again, they rose again. That's what we Baptists profess in Believer's Baptism.

My, when we're baptized, we go into death, is it, where? And then we're buried, and then we come out again. And we testify that when Christ went in, we went in with him. When he was buried, we were buried with him.

When he rose again, we rose with him. And sprinkling dust doesn't do that. It takes immersion to bring out those great truths.

And so in our Believer's Baptism, we profess to the world that we were identified with Christ. But when we come down to chapter 6, a little bit, to verse 11, we find this verse, Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead, and ye unto death. You know, we don't only look back and believe that when Jesus died, we died.

But here's the great truth for you young believers. We've got to die daily. That's what Paul talked about, dying daily.

He didn't talk about going into a wee bathroom and closing his eyes and getting up. He just talked about dying daily. This is what we thought, calculation.

My, we're tainted by something. And we look back and we remember that we died for a thing in Christ. And now we've got to actually turn our back upon it.

We die daily. We calculate ourselves dead. And then when we went to the 13th verse in chapter 6, we found that we were to yield ourselves unto God.

And that was presentation, wasn't it? So that you get the gateway of identification with Christ, and then calculation in Christ, and then presentation to Christ. And then last week when the fog was on and so many of you were hindered, and we were very sorry about that, we went right through from verse 15 to the end of the chapter. And in verses 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and then verse 22, yes, seven verses, we found the word servants eight times.

So that we came to the conclusion that servants, this was the subject of last week's exposition. And we call this vocation for Christ. You see, this is how it works with the young believer.

He's been tempted. He remembers that he died for this thing when Christ died. Now he's got to actually do it.

He reckons himself dead for this thing. I can't go in there. I can't touch it.

He turns away. He presents his members to God. And when he gives this presentation, he becomes a servant of the living God.

That's vocation. That's what you call practical godly living. That's what we need in these days.

We need to be taught how to live for God. And that's what the great apostle is teaching in these chapters. So we went through chapter 6, and we've come to chapter 7 this evening, and we're going through the first 13 verses, and the gateway you shall find is unification with Christ this evening.

But we'll take our time about the exposition. Now we're at chapter 7, and we're beginning at verse 1, and you'll notice that Paul is asking a question. Paul's a great teacher, and good teachers ask questions, and they answer them.

And so this is Paul's interrogation. He says, No, ye not brethren, and I want to underline the word brethren just for a moment there. I want you to get your mind fixed that he's really talking to saints, and not sinners.

For far too many dragged sinners into this 7th chapter, and I will have you to understand that he's talking to brethren. That's why he put it in there, so that we wouldn't get muddled in the thing. Do you know, it's really wonderful how Paul talks to his brethren again and again.

See verse 4, he says, Wherefore my brethren, he's telling society, so that you'll not get muddled. He's keeping this before. When he gets along a little bit, he talks about my beloved brethren.

Do you know, I think we should always keep this in our minds. We should keep it in our minds when dealing with one another too. You know, when Paul wrote the letter to the Corinthians, you remember that in the 3rd chapter, he said to the Corinthians, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual.

You're not spiritual people at all. You're yet calm. You walk as men.

There are strife and divisions among us. And yet in the 15th chapter he said, My beloved brethren, these steadfast, unmovable, so on. And we should never forget that even though men are not really pulling the line, as we call it, and maybe they don't see eye to eye with us, if they're born again washed in the blood of the Lamb, never forget that they're our brethren.

And we must never forget it. Paul loved all the saints. And there were no cloud on earth who said so much about Paul behind the back of the Corinthians.

And yet he called them my beloved brethren. So let's settle it that he's talking to faith. And he says, No, ye not.

You see, he's teaching the saints something, or at least he's trying to. Know ye not, brethren, for I speak for them that know the law. Now, we must settle what law this is he's talking about.

And that's very easily settled from the verses that come afterward. It's the civil law. It's not the moral law, they claim commandments.

And it's not the ceremonial law of the Jews, of the types and shadows. No, no. You see, he's actually writing for faith and law.

So it wouldn't be the moral law. And it's certainly not the ceremonial law. No, it's just the civil law.

That's the law of the Lamb. And he says, I'm writing to boys who really know it. And the boys at home really knew the law, all right.

No trouble about that. So let's get that settled. I approve that, of course, as we go on reading.

He says, No, ye not, brethren, for I speak for them that know the law. How doth the law have dominion over a man? What's the word dominion? Because you'll have to face it once it's right in the texture. He says, You know, the civil law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.

Because you know that, don't you? They put up now in the town that you're to go to at thirty miles an hour. I know you don't all keep it. I know that.

I see the policeman at the back smiling. I'm sure he's perfectly aware that the pastor is the worst offender. But nevertheless, it's the law.

It's the civil law. It's the law of the land. And it hath dominion over us as long as we live.

As long as it's kept, it hath dominion over us. So he's just talking to his brethren who know the law, and he's pointing this out, that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth. And now he comes to use an illustration.

For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. And you'll notice the words, is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. That's a big saying, isn't it? Mind you, you want to get that into your mind when you're getting married, that you're going to be bound to this old cellar you're taking, and you're going to be bound to it as long as he lives and you live.

And there's no joke about it, because I think it's something that all the young ones need to say. It's a very salient matter in life, but you're going to be bound by law. You're going to be bound to this man long as he

liveth.

Now, watch this, because there's a tremendous point here. We'll have an illustration in verse 2. For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. But if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law for her husband.

So that you can see the binding in the one case, and you can see the loosing in the other case. And then it goes on with the illustration, So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband be dead, she is free from that law.

So that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Now, you will notice this, that when Paul's talking of a woman getting loosed, and it works on the other side just the same, he says that the only thing that can loose a person who's married is death. And he never even brings about divorce to her.

He just says the only thing that's going to do away with this law as far as you're concerned is death. And he never contemplates divorce, not in these verses. Now, for a moment.

You see, I know that our civil laws might bind you when you're married. And I know that they've got a lot of things that they'll let you free on. But Paul's not thinking up this point about what the civil law will do for married people.

The moment he takes up the illustration, he's only using it to show that the civil law binds you. And then he immediately takes up God's point of view. You can't be loosed.

And you can't, you know. There's no such thing as getting out of it. Oh, I know that the land will let you out, but God doesn't.

Would you like me to go further with that? All right. Matthew, we're at Matthew 19. I think it's worthwhile taking a moment with this this evening.

It's come up in the chapter, and we might as well trash it out for the moment or two. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 19, and we're at verse 3. The Pharisees also came unto him, the Lord Jesus, tempting him, saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? The Lord Jesus answered and said unto them, Have ye not read? Are you young fellows, just put up your ears and listen to the way the Lord Jesus answers things. Now, the moment that the Lord Jesus was faced with answering about doctrine, of it whose, he always went to the word of God, never used his logic, as it were.

And mind you, all the pleasures of wisdom belonged to him. He always went to the old book. You remember when the devil came to him, he immediately answered the devil, It is written.

And the next time he came, It is written. And then the next time, It is written. He always goes to the word of God.

So when anybody bothers you, just start thinking about what God's word says, would you? And it will help you out. If you can handle the cause properly, I'll tell you this, you can defeat the devil. So you don't need to be worried about anybody else.

If it's good enough to defeat the devil, you don't need to get worried about humans. So if you know the book and you are through, then you can use the thought. Now watch what he said, verse 4. The unwritten said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and

female? I didn't believe in evolution, did I? No, he really believed that God made them.

He didn't think that they came out of some porcelain that was in the bottom of an old muddy pool. No, the Lord Jesus said this and it's good enough for me. That he that made them at the beginning, made them male and female.

And that's exactly what I believe. You can think you know better than the Lord Jesus if you like, but you're a poor fool if you do. I believe that Christ, with God's Son and all the treasures of wisdom belong to him, and yet he's talking about what God did at the beginning.

He said he made them male and female. And said, you know God didn't only make them, he talked to them. And said, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife.

Mind you, we parents need to view this. You know this is a mighty thing when it takes place. And you may hear a boy and he grows up and you see him developing and he falls in love.

A wife will leave home when he gets married and cleave to his wife. And you should be minding your own business, you know. And you'll be happier for them if you do.

This, this is what God said anyway. That a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. It's a very dear relationship this, you know.

This is not just nonsense. This is very dear and very near. And it is what God said for them all.

For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. It's a tremendous statement. They two shall be one flesh.

Therefore, said Jesus, they are no more two but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together. Let not man be a religious man or a judge man or whatever kind of man you like to make him.

Let not man put them asunder. But man has put them asunder, you know. But God said let not man do it.

But man doesn't care, man just does it. But that doesn't vindicate the doing. God says don't do it.

Let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give her writing of divorce to me and to put her away? I remember this very well, you know. What Jesus said unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your heart, you know, Moses had a reason for giving in his.

Suffered, did you get the word? Suffered you to put away your wife. But from the beginning it was not so. So Jesus said, There are no more than this, you know.

None at all. They're made one, and therefore they are no more two. See verse 6. Therefore they are no more two.

And you can't make them two again either. For it's right to know. But you can't do it.

They are no more. And we come to the picture a bit simply. This man.

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication. And that rephrase is the phrase that they think opens the door. But he's talking about putting away a wife for fornication.

And shall marry another. Committed adultery. Oh yes, the separation taught in this book, but not divorce.

Separation. You can't ask a man to live with a woman who's become a widow. And he can get away from her after he's had.

Not a bit of it. He can't marry. If he puts away his wife and marries another, he's an adulterer.

Watch this. I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication. And shall marry another.

Committed adultery. And who shall marry a pair which is put away, doth commit adultery. There's no getting out of it.

I tell you the only way that this law is put away is by death. Can't get out of it. Once that the two are made one, they shall be no more twins.

They can't make them two again. Can't force them to live together if they can't live together. They can separate.

You can't go and marry another one. Wonderful experience in chapter 7. I think it will clear it up for you. Chapter 7 and verse 10.

Paul is writing here to the married ones. But unto the married I command, lest not I but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband. Now watch these two words.

But and if. Isn't that well put? But and if she departs. Now watch this thing.

Let her remain unmarried. That's what it says. Or be reconciled to her husband.

And let not the husband put away his wife. You see, the but and if is there. You see, you can't ask a woman to live in a cage with a bear, can you? Not at all.

If the man she's married has turned in to be a brute beast, we can't put her in for war. But if she can't put it on, if she's got to get out. But she's got to remain unmarried.

Or there is a barrier. Don't look all here. My dear young folks, marriage is a very sacred thing.

And if you stand before God one day, and God makes the twin one, they shall never be twin again. On the face of this earth. If he dies, she's loosed, it's true.

But you can't separate them and make them two again. Or you can't just walk out for nothing and go and get another one. That's why the corruption is sweeping America tonight.

And before long we'll be faced with a fear. This is the teaching of God's Word. If you can't live with them, you can get out.

If it's just, you can get out. My, we know poor ladies that just simply could go no further. And no Christian man would have asked them to do it either.

Well, they just have to get out. But they remain unmarried to the end of their days, or his days. Don't forget that.

Well, let's get back to the chapter. If all you can see, he asks the question here. At the beginning of the chapter it's an interrogation.

And he's asking saints this question. Just to point out that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. And then he takes up the illustration that the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives.

And they never even contemplate divorce. Because he's on God's side here. But if the husband be dead, she's loosed from the law for husband.

So then if while her husband lives, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband be dead, she's free from that law so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man. And after asking the question, the interrogation and giving the illustration, then he makes the application.

Wherefore, wherefore, my brethren, and he's very careful about it, we also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. My, that's a tremendous statement, isn't it? It's a wonderful thing. He said, my beloved brethren, I want you to get hold of it.

So you are dead to the law by the body of Christ. Another law is out now, but we'll get that fixed up just in a moment. You know, one of the greatest subjects in the New Testament for you young believers is the body of Christ.

Something to start off with, and you can do a few. I'll give you a hand just for a moment, and then you tell him the rest. You remember Hebrews chapter 10, and when the Lord Jesus was coming into the world, he said, A body hast thou prepared me.

Now, I want you to get that. I want you to remember that somebody is coming, is coming into the world. And he's saying this, A body hast thou.

We'll keep the body over here for a while. A body hast thou prepared me. That is a true statement, isn't it? You see, friends, in the miraculous conception that took place in the virgin's womb by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son, took upon him the form of a servant, and this body was prepared by God.

Body hast thou prepared me. A very precious body, you couldn't have perfectly chosen it. Then you see, that's the body in conception.

But we want to look again at the body in crucifixion. This was the body that the world crucified. This was the body that the world punished.

This was the body that the world battered. This was the body that the world piped for the Roman government. But I want you to get this, that on the arms of the Lord Jesus, by the offering of his body, it became a sacrifice, you know.

When we take the bread on Sunday morning out to table, we always remember the words of the Lord Jesus as he took the bread and bit it. You hear it? He said, this is my body which is given. This is the body that was offered in sacrifice.

You see, this is the body that bore my sins. He his own self bore my sins in his own body. This is tremendous, isn't it? This is the body in conception.

And then the body in crucifixion. And then on the third day, this body, and then he wrote to me, I think, and I said, really harmonious. This was brought back from the dead.

You know, the Lord Jesus said to them in his day in John 2, destroy this temple. And he pointed to himself, and in three days I will lift it up. There's not a lot of light in the country can teach the expert on this.

Because this body was brought back from the dead. Brought out from the tomb. And this is called in the Bible, his glorious body.

His glorious body. When he comes back, you know, this body will be made light on him. His glorious body.

May you subject this. Holy people in your fancy now. That's the body in crucifixion, and the body in conception, and the body in resurrection.

But you know, at the cross, in the depths of the mighty cross and there are so many sides to it. You know, in the body of Christ, we died, so every claim the Lord can make. And the seven day adventures can't put us under the law anymore.

We are dead. At all. By the body of Christ we are talking here.

Dead. He says, wherefore, my brethren. That's what he said.

He says, wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. Now, wait a minute. That's not the point of the subject, of course.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ. Now, what does he say? That ye shall be married to another if the heaven was raised from the dead. That's why I call this unification.

With Christ. You know, it's the most thrilling thing. You know, friends, I'd like all the saints to get the thrill out of this.

You know, we are so young. We don't get to be christened. They'll get christened.

They're married. And there'll be no divorce. There'll be no divorce.

Are you lost again, boys? I am lost to you again. I am lost to you again. Talking of being lost again, it's a great pity of you.

You don't know the first thing about what happens at the cross, you know. Not the first thing. Man, you're walking your way to heaven.

It's a great pity of you. I'm not going to heaven because of what I do, you know. I'm going to heaven because of what He did to me.

My after cross. Through the body. I died to the law.

But I married to the risen Christ. Ah, this is unification. I'm joined with Him.

I'm united with Him. I'm one with Him. That's amazing.

Now, that's not the whole story yet. We're only halfway there. Don't jump the hurdles too quick.

Wait for me. Now, watch it. We're going to get there right now.

Watch this. We'll read it over again. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring falsehood unto God.

Now, just hold that a minute and the next verse. I'm going to go to verse 6. But now, we are delivered from the law. You know, sometimes we sing this in this meeting.

Free from the law. Oh, happy condition. And I won't allow any man to put me under it either.

I won't be put under any law. There's no man in the Baptist denomination, my Lord, you know. Not a one of them.

Not a one of them. My dear friends, let's keep this. We have only one Lord.

I'm united to Christ. Delivered. And I'm delivered.

Delivered is the word. From the law. Now, watch this.

Verse 6. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead and we were held. Now, here it is. That we should serve in unison to Christ.

Now, that's what we would like to see. You see, when you're going through these gateways, you look back and you remember you were identified. And then you calculate, well, I'll die for that thing now.

And then you yield your members to the Lord your Lord. And then you become sovereign. You know, when a woman marries a man, she doesn't just marry him, you know, just to go around and tell the rest of the girls she's married.

Because if you're getting married just to talk about it, it'd be better to give him up to you. But you know, she starts to work for him. And she cleans the house like.

She washes the church. Brushes her shoes. Yes, she brushes her shoes.

She washes the church. Brushes her shoes. Yes, she brushes her shoes.

I'd like to tell you a whole lot of other things she does. But wait a minute, get this over to you. You know, you can get maids.

Ah, but the maid only cleans the house and washes the shirts and does the shoes. But the wee woman washes them because they're his. A little sprint altogether.

She does all these menial little tasks because they're his. You know, she really loves to do these things for him. Ah, that's where we are now, isn't it? Ah, that's where we are now.

Yes, we look back. We identify. We calculate.

We present. We're servants. Ah, but we're more.

You know, we are really one with the Lord. And we do these things because we love him. That's newness of spirit.

You know, the maid only does it because she's under the law. She's got to get up at seven. And if the mistress doesn't hear her knocking about before seven, they'll be around.

Isn't it she loves to get out of bed? Oh, no. She's under the law. Ah, but the wee woman loves him.

That's different. We are serving in units of spirit. All this is unification with Christ.

Good to God we've really got this into our bones tonight, that we've begun to love him. You know, friends, I'm positive of the issue that the greatest thing in the world is love. And the greatest, greatest thing in your life ever is to love him.

That's all. There's nothing adventurous in that. Now when you love somebody and they're on your heart, you know, there is no labor anymore.

You take up all the wee moments just to pray. And there are so many little things you're prepared to do. That's what we need again in our assemblies, isn't it? Just pure love for Christ.

And you know, that's exactly what Christ wants. Do you remember writing to Vanessa to the church of Ephesus? She said, I know your works, I know all about you, I know what you do, I know how solid you are, I know you're very particular about who preaches in this church. Nevertheless, I'm somewhat against it.

I must love you. Don't love me the way you used to do. Oh, that the Lord would take us back to real love.

Now, when Paul got all that off his chest, he was facing another problem. And this is what I've called Paul's explanation. You see, we come to verse 7 now.

He says, what shall we say then? Is the law sin? You see, he was really afraid that people would get this mixed up. You see, when he talks about sin in chapter 6, you remember that he said, verse 11, And now when he talks about being dead to the law, he's afraid that some smart aleck will put the two together and say, well, is the law sin? And he doesn't want you to get that notion. Because he faces the question here, and then he says, God forbid.

Nay, I have not known sin, but by the law. So you can see what law he has in his mind now. While he started with the civil law as an illustration, he's back on to the moral law.

I have not known sin by the law, for I have not known lust, except the law hath said thou shalt not covet enough the tenth commandment. So he's up to moral law now, all right. But, you see, he said, this thing is not sin.

Because I can remember when I didn't know anything about this particular kind of thing. And only when I faced the law, thou shalt not covet, then I knew that there was such a thing within my breast. And the law was discovering sin in me that I didn't know about.

So it's not sin. And then he goes further than that. He says, but sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of contubérance.

Now, it would be much easier if we translated one word here. We'll read from the middle of verse 7. Nay, I have not known sin, but by the law. For I have not known covetousness, we'll put that word.

It could be rendered that, you know. Except the law hath said thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by that particular commandment, wrought in me all manner of covetousness.

You see, once the authorities in our land say, Thou shalt not proceed through a built-up area over thirty miles an hour. You know, before that came up, before we saw necessity. Why, some of us just tore along through the streets and through the villages.

And it wasn't until they put it up that you really felt there was an urge in you to do it. You know, you were tearing along before and you didn't realize there was an urge to do this thing. Oh, nobody bothered me.

But once there's the thirty there, you know, it works all manner of breaking the law. You don't only break it in one manner, you break it in five or six and every round. There's an urging you don't want to do, you want to go on.

And it's the law that's discovering the urge, because when it wasn't there you didn't discover the urge. And that's what it seems. And then he said this, For without the law, sin was dead.

At least it appears like that. You didn't find it kicking the way it does when it's up. You know, if they say don't walk on the grass somewhere, you can be sure some wee fellow will get on to it.

He will. And you know, I've known this from days gone by. When a smoker gets into a carriage, sitting thinking about the football, and his eye lights on the window and it says no smoking.

That's just when the poor man starts. If it hadn't been there he'd be all wretched now. But you know, now he can't keep his eye off it, and he can't keep his hand out of his pocket either.

It's written law. It's finding him out. And if it wasn't there, well, he just wouldn't find it out the same, that's all.

And so it appears to be dead, but you know, it was very much alive. Watch this. Verse nine.

For I was alive without the law once. Now I profess, that's the tightest phrase in the chapter. To expound.

I'll get any one of you a go at it. When Paul says, I was alive without the law once. What part of his life is he thinking about? Is it the Christian part? Is it the Pharisee who passed when he was a Pharisee? Is it when he was a boy at the feet of Gamaliel? What part of his life is he talking about? Now I read about twenty expositors on this thing, and they're every one different.

So you're safe no matter what you say. You'll get somebody to back you up. You can be sure of that.

This is a very difficult life. I'll tell you what I believe, and you don't need to swallow it. I believe that in the Jewish community, even to this day, a child is circumcised at eight days.

And then he goes along and comes and goes to the synagogue, and nobody pays very much attention to him until he's twelve. And then there's a special ceremony when he becomes twelve. You remember they

took the Lord Jesus to the temple when he was twelve.

That's when Mary and Joseph lost. But today he becomes twelve. He's brought into the synagogue or the temple, as it may have been, and he takes a note now that he'll keep the law.

And I believe this phrase is referring to the days before he was twelve. That's what I believe. I have mine now.

Because I shall prove next week when we come to that great part of the chapter that he wasn't talking of the Pharisee, and it wasn't the man that sat at the feet of Gamaliel, and it certainly had nothing to do with the spiritual life. He wouldn't say once. I believe it was those days when he hadn't a care in the world, and he can go way back and he can remember, Oh, you know, I was doing pretty well.

I hadn't to obey the law. I hadn't to even think about it. I was alive without the law once.

Then there came the time, you know, when responsibility came on his shoulder. But when the commandment came, sin revived. He became convicted now, and I died.

And the commandment, which was ordained to life, you remember when God gave the law, He said this, do and thus it is. That's it. The commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me. You know, he found out that sin was stronger within him than the commandment that was before him. And he was slain by the law.

Oh, yes. We owe the Apostle the great teacher, you know, if you take your time with him. And then he concludes this bit like this, Wherefore, the law is holy, and this particular commandment is holy.

Exactly. Good. But don't you mix the laws enough.

There's nothing wrong with the law. There's something wrong with me. The law says those shall not covet, and I can't do anything within me.

Bricks at every place. And the man who takes upon himself to live by the law, he's condemned already. Condemned already.

You know, the whole truth is this, that the Ten Commandments was just a kind of a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. You see, you begin to see, I can't love the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind. When the law says, Thou shalt not covet, Oh, God, I'm broken a thousand million times.

And you just stand before God up in the earth, meeting Him, and praise God. There's a wonderful Savior. A Savior! If you put your arms around Him, make Him your own precious, particular Savior, then you can say, I died to that law in Christ.

And then you have a risen Christ. Oh, that's where we're getting to next week. Then you have a risen Christ who can live out His life in you.

Now, wait a minute before you run. You know, when I was a young fellow, I used to get up very early in the morning to read God's words. And you know, I'm sure that I must have read these phrases several times.

Just short phrases like this. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks.

Rejoice evermore. And you know, I can remember times at half four in the morning and five o'clock when I'm down on my knees in the little back room and I'm facing these things. I'm only a young believer.

And you know, I'm reading this. Rejoice evermore. In every thing give thanks.

Pray without ceasing. And I take these phrases and I make them a law for my life. And I just spread my shoulders and I'm going out into the world and I'm going to pray all day long and I'll rejoice no matter what happens.

And Lord Jesus, I'll thank you whether it rains or whether it doesn't or whether I'm hungry or whether... And I'm not two yards from the corner. Because a whole lot of believers take God's word and they make it up. And you don't do it like this.

No, no, no. Oh, the Lord was kind. He looked down.

He said, there's a lot of people who have gone the wrong way about this. You see, I'm trying to do this thing in my own time. I know what I need to live every day.

It's not I, you know. It's not done that way. It's not I that does everything.

It's the Lord lives in me. You know, I just trust him to get me through the doctor. Oh, it's not that I haven't cut and dried.

It's not that there's a sort of gramophone record. I could never do it before me again. It's just that I come and I just trust him.

And he helps me. Helps me in the preparation. And then he helps me in the exposition.

Then he helps me right on to the conclusion. Because without him, I can't do anything. And without him, I can't do anything.

The answer is the Resurrection. Oh, the faith. Trust your death in the Resurrection.

And trust your death in saving. Because if you do, you'll live for God. We have a great portion next week One of the thrilling bits.

Romans 7. You know, we want to know when Paul says some of these things. Have a look at them before you go. You know, he says verse 15 For that which I do I alone ought For what I would, that do I not But what I hit, that do I Then down the chapter he says verse 19 For the good that I would, I do not But the evil which I would not, that I do This is a horrible experience.

Think this bit out. Is it Paul's experience as a believer? Is it Paul's experience as a Pharisee? Is it Paul's experience as a natural man? Whose experience is this? You think it through. Have a good read out.

And come along, I'll expound it for you. And we'll get through another gateway. And it's a lovely one.

It's at the end of the chapter, but you'll find it next week. Let's bow together. Blessed Lord, we thank thee for thy word.

We thank thee for this great letter. We thank thee for how clear the great apostle made things. O God, we remember when we were condemned with sin.

And we remember the very moment when we were justified by faith. And Lord, it seems that we're only learning now how to walk. But help us to go through these gateways.

That we might walk worthy of the vocation with which we are called. And dear Lord, help us to do things for thee. Just because we love thee.

Little, seemingly insignificant, mean things as the world would think. Let's do them for thee, Lord. With real love in our hearts.

Bless the clouds. Bless thy sheep, Lord. Bless this cold, Lord.

Caught us in thy fear and with thy touch. For thy holy name's sake. Amen.

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