

The Book of Romans

The Gospel of God

Is the Law Sin?

- How did the Law, which is holy and good, come to be such a negative force in the history of salvation?

⁷ What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET."

⁸ But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin *is* dead.

⁹ I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died;

¹⁰ and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;

¹¹ for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

¹² So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

¹³ Therefore did that which is good become death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

(Romans 7:7-13)

Is the Law Sin?

- No! But sin uses the Law to bring forth sin and death

Sin and the Law

1. The Law reveals (makes known) sin
2. The Law arouses (brings to life) sin

➤ What experience is Paul referring to?

- Paul does not describe his psychological state, but his condition as seen from the perspective of faith
- Paul describes himself in solidarity with his people, Israel – denotes Israel's historical encounter with the Law at Sinai
- Paul views his/Israel's experience with the Mosaic Law as paradigmatic for all people with law

Sin and the Law

1. The Law reveals (makes known) sin
2. The Law arouses (brings to life) sin
 - sin sprang back to renewed vigor with the coming of the Mosaic commandment
 - the coming of the Law resulted in death – spiritual death under God's condemnation

Sin and the Law

3. The Law was used by sin to deceive and kill
 - the promise of life held out by the law deceived Israel into thinking it could attain life through the Law
 - because of sin, the demand of the Law could only bring condemnation and death

Purpose of the Law

- #### ➤ Making sin “utterly sinful”
- by strictly defining sin, the Law turns sin into conscious and willful rebellion against God

²¹ Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

²² But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

(Galatians 3:21-22)