

Romans Lesson 9 Articles

Then why did God give the Law if it does not produce holiness? What purposes did God have in mind? Well, Paul made two discoveries that answer this question: (1) the Law itself is spiritual, but (2) the believer is carnal, sold under sin. What a humiliating discovery it was to that proud Pharisee that his very nature was unspiritual and unable to obey the law of God! The Law reveals sin (v. 7), for when we read the Law, the very things it condemns appear in our lives. The Law energizes sin (v. 8), and sin agitates in our nature. The Law slays the sinner and deceives him (vv. 9–11), making him realize that he is too weak to meet God's standard. Finally, the Law reveals the sinfulness of sin (v. 13), not just our outward actions, but especially our sinful attitudes. The reason the believer cannot make himself holy by means of law is not because God's law is not holy and good, but because our nature is so sinful that it cannot be changed or controlled by law. It is a wonderful day in the life of the Christian when he or she discovers that "the old nature knows no law and the new nature needs no law."¹

The conflict within you between the flesh and the Spirit is a form of spiritual warfare, and you win much of the battle just by realizing that the struggle exists.

Sin is still a powerful force, but it can no longer control you unless you allow it to do so. You are not doomed to failure, and to believe otherwise is to remain in needless, painful bondage. That breaks the heart of the Lord and grieves the Spirit (Eph. 4:30).

The truth is, you cannot wander too far, fail too many times, or exceed Christ's forgiveness. When you repent and turn to Him, He restores you to fellowship as though nothing had ever happened.

Peter denied Jesus three times, despite his boasts to remain faithful; yet the Lord forgave him and made him a powerful leader in the early church. Peter had learned his lesson well. Though he surely experienced other failures and setbacks, he knew that his Savior remained forever at his side, ready to forgive.

Notice what an older and wiser Peter had to say about God's grace: "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:3, 4).

You are on an ever-upward climb to holiness, set apart for God's purposes. As you learn to say no to the power of sin and to rest in His grace, you are made free to obey with renewed vigor and understanding. It is imperative to grasp that obedience is always a choice; you decide whether you will yield to God and so become more like Christ.

You have a great potential to live free and holy through Jesus Christ, but God will never force you to do what He desires. Yet He longs for you to turn to Him in every spiritual conflict, acknowledge your weakness, and ask for His power to say no.

Are you tired of fighting a losing battle? Do you secretly feel like a failure? It's not true! And the sooner you learn to rejoice and grow in the reality of your identity in Him, the sooner you will experience the thrill of victory.²

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe's expository outlines on the New Testament* (pp. 385–386). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

² Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Ro 7:15–25). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.