

FORGIVEN & FREE



from Romans, a letter in the Bible

Through this series we'll be working our way through the Biblical letter of Romans. We'll explore themes of forgiveness, freedom, hope and grace.

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Title: The glorious purpose of the law

Date: 4th June 2023

Speaker: Marcus

Site: City Centre

Bible reference: Romans 7:7-25

Overview

Paul has just said that God's law has some seemingly negative side-effects. This might raise questions in Jewish Christians' minds. In answering them he helps us understand the purpose of the law. 1) It reveals sin 2) it provokes sin and 3) it condemns sin. It's helpful to bear in mind, in reading what he writes, that his focus is on God's law, and what he calls "the flesh." God's law is things like the 10 commandments (do's and don'ts). The flesh is our fallen nature that is hostile to God. Paul writes a vivid first person present tense description of someone struggling to obey the law in their flesh. Their failure leaves them feeling "wretched," but crying out for a deliverer, which is found in Jesus.

The purpose of God's law

- How does God's law **reveal sin**? (it makes right and wrong more objective, shows God is interested in our attitudes as well as our actions, reveals sin as misrepresenting God...)
- How does God's law **provoke sin**? (when it hears God's command, sin rises up to disobey, people become proud of their sin, when God spoke to Adam Satan slithered up, when God gave the 10 commandments, Israel made a golden calf, ...)
- How does God's law **condemn sin**? (in the Garden of Eden and to Moses, God's command promised life for obeying, but predicted death for disobeying)
- How does God's law **lead people to Jesus**? (shows us how bad our actions and attitudes are, and that we can't obey in our own strength, and so need for a saviour to pay for our sin and empower us to live right).

Personal application

- How would you describe **your struggle against sin**? (it is a battle? Do you experience much victory? How does sin try to deceive you? Is the battle constant or occasional, has it changed over time, how does it make you feel?...)
- How do you **position yourself** so that you are not living "in the flesh," but rather "**in Christ**" and "by the Spirit"? (i) Thank God that he is our heavenly Father, ii) thank God our sin was paid for on the cross, iii) thank God that he has set us free to live right, iv) ask him for forgiveness and help, v) step out in faith and love to follow Jesus. If you fall again, don't simply try harder, go back to i)...)