

Introduction:

- Ro 8:1-14
- There are two things the law cannot do: 1. I cannot justify us. 2. It cannot sanctify us.
 - It is futile to try to let the law remove our condemnation and it is futile to let the law try to remove our rebellion against God and our love for created things.
- All humanity has two problems: And neither problem can be fix by the law of God...10 commands. Goal of the law was the two commands: Love God, love each other.
 - 1 we deserve condemnation
 - 2 we are rebellious against God.
- There is only One who can deal with both. Jesus! What the law was powerless to do, Jesus accomplished. What the law demands only the Spirit provides! What the law requires... the Spirit produces... mainly love! Gal 5:22-23
- What the law could not do God did by sending His one and only Son, Jesus. Jesus condemned sin in His flesh.
- But how did He deal with our sinful lusts, those carnal cravings? How do we become holy, loving and Christ like after we are justified by faith? How do you fight/contend for holiness and love and Christ likeness? *"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to **contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**"* (Jude 3, NKJV) Read also vs. 4.

I. The Law Is Unable vs. 3. Three things the law cannot do.

- A. The law cannot remove our condemnation!
 1. To begin to be transformed our condemnation must be removed.
 2. We begin to be transformed when we receive from the Father through Christ Jesus the verdict of "NOT GUILTY!" The law can't do that.
- B. The law cannot conquer our flesh!
 1. It is powerless to change us at the root level.
 2. It cannot remove our reluctance to love God. And it cant remove our poisonous preferences for created things that we prefer above God. In fact the law stirs up those things inside of us.
 - a) *"The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. ..."* (Romans 8:3, NLT) It cant save you and it cannot deliver you.
 - b) *"God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were..."* (Romans 5:20, NLT) The law literally causes an increase of sin! It causes the sinner to become even more sinful.
 - c) *"When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death."* (Romans 7:5, NLT)

- d) *"But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power."* (Romans 7:8, NLT)
- e) Yet we must understand that the law was good it was sin that brought about death. The just revealed how full of death each of us were! Ro 7:13 The law makes sin more visible, blatant, obvious so that we would hate it all the more!
- f) Lets go back and look at the other half of the verse we just read.
 - (1) Ro 5:20 Where sin abound grace abound all the more! *"But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant."* Ro 5:20
 - (2) Ro 5:21 Where death ruled now Gods wonderful grace rules, give us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord!!!
 - (3) Shall we sin that grace may abound? NO! Ro 6:1

- C. The law could not give Jesus glory for justification and sanctification. Why? Its powerless.
 - 1. God's purpose is to sanctify us in a way that the credit and the glory for our freedom and transformation goes to Jesus Christ, not to ourselves and not to the law.
 - 2. Therefore God calls us to His Son who worked for us in history and works now *in us* by His Spirit.
 - 3. The law is unable to magnify the Son. It can only magnify our sin! Only when Christ Himself wins our affections over all worldly desires will He get the glory God means for him to have.
 - 4. God does not get the glory when you lead your self 'discipline self' to stop sinning. You will boast of yourself in that moment. Christ will not get the glory.
 - 5. God wants His Son to get all the glory! For our justification and for our sanctification!
 - 6. The law is unable to: remove our condemnation, control our flesh, and bring glory to Jesus! It is powerless! But....!

II. The Spirit Is Able!

- A. *"But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God."* (Romans 8:9-10, NLT)
- B. But the point I want to make is simply this: it is not by turning to the law that we fulfill the law and lead lives of love, it is by turning to the living Christ! Who are you turning too? Do you actually believe He delivers?
 - 1. Sanctification happens not because of the law but because of Christ/the Spirit living within us. That is the power of our sanctification!
 - 2. The way we do this is to fix our gaze on Jesus and put our faith in the glorified Christ Jesus who was crucified, risen and reigns and lives in us! Read Heb 12:1-ff.

3. It is enjoying Jesus and exalting Him above else that gives us the sanctifying power of His presence. THIS BRINGS HIM GLORY not just for our justification but also for our sanctification!
- C. One of Paul's clearest statements on this is, "*So, my dear brothers and sisters, **this is the point:** You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God.*" (Romans 7:4, NLT)
 1. The harvest of good deeds comes not from the law it comes from abiding in the One who gave it all for us. There is where we bear fruit.
 2. If you want to bear fruit for God you must die to the law. If you want to live a life of Love you must die to the law. They cant deal with your condemnation nor your rebellion....only Jesus can. There, and there only will you bear fruit.
 3. And the fruit is love. Love is the fruit of turning to the living Christ and finding him more to be desired than everything that hinders love.
- D. So live in the Spirit. "*But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit.*" (Romans 7:6, NLT)
 1. The law cannot make you a loving person but the Spirit can.
 2. The letter of the law kills but the Spirit gives life! He changes us at the core. There he wins our deepest admiration and delight!
 3. God's aim is that Jesus gets the exaltation and we get the Freedom!

III. Make Up Your Mind...Choose

- A. "*Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.*" (Romans 8:5, NLT)
 1. Think about sinful things....this leads to death.
 2. Thing about the things that please the Spirit....this leads to life and peace.
- B. "*Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.*" (Colossians 3:1-2, NLT)
 1. This is not a verse you must choose to believe not just quote for a result.
 2. If you have been raise with Christ spend some time thinking about what that means.
- C. Both Moses and Joshua said, to the children of Israel, "Choose you this day whom you will serve." See Jesus and choose life!

Conclusion:

- "*Because unless you pursue obedience through seeing and savoring him, you won't get the transformation and he won't get the glorification. You stay in bondage, and he is dishonored.*"
John Piper