

Understanding the Law of Sin and Death (Go To Meeting)

Albert Jones—November 4, 2023

In preparing the messages for Go To Meeting, we really have an opportunity to teach ourselves as we prepare a message for you. The Bible tells us that we need to take heed to our own words.

We've been going through a series here in the fellowship in Michigan focused on understanding sin in the flesh. The struggle that we go through in the flesh and overcoming and striving to overcome and put behind us all those weaknesses.

We recognize that when God called us, we committed to this as a journey all the way to the return of Christ or the resurrection.

So we're busy at work putting sin out of our life through the power of God's Spirit working in us, praising and giving glory to God for the imputed righteousness that comes from Christ. But we also recognize that life in the flesh is not an easy thing.

There is a reason that the struggle is so difficult, and God said it would be. We experience it every day. God's formula for developing Holy, perfect, righteous character within us. His formula requires struggle and trials. We have to be mindful of how that impacts us and what we need to do in yielding to God so that we can overcome all of that.

With today's message, I hope to bring a greater and a deeper understanding of the weakness that we struggle against in the flesh and why it's there. You know we can have it within ourselves and we all desire to do right for God and to be righteous and live righteous lives.

We see the struggle, though; so let's try to understand why that is; understanding the law of sin and death.

- What does that come from?
- What is that?

As a result of choices made in the Garden of Eden, our father and our mother passed on to us a condition of death. This condition of death is a part of what we struggle against. It is genetically connected to us as human beings. Every man, woman, child upon the face of the earth has this struggle within them.

I think that above all the apostles, Paul brought it out very clearly in his writings in the Epistles of Paul. Let's begin with the positive, first of all, *and to realize that there is a way to overcome the law of sin death within!* There is a solution to

this weakness. Our heavenly Father and Elder Brother has provided for us a clear path.

But we have to remember, though, to navigate it with Them, holding on to Them, recognizing Their part, but also recognizing our weaknesses as they are within this flesh.

We'll spend a little time in Rom. 5 just to establish a good foundation as to where we're going.

Romans 5:1: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

As a statement, that calculates everything necessary to be successful in the struggle. As we continue in this journey in faith—that is what we hold onto through to the end and never let go of that.

Verse 2: "Through Whom we also have access..."

Made possible by the work of the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. So, Jesus Christ is the key!

Verse 2: "Through Whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we ourselves boast in *the* hope of the glory of God."

Everything that we are struggling against, God says that we will be successful *if* we realize the importance of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. In the work that He has done for us in the office that He holds in heaven for us to be able to tap into and to keep moving forward rather keep moving forward.

Verse 3: "And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations..."

- we will go through difficulties
 - we will encounter trials
- some brought on by*
- our own mistakes
 - our own weaknesses
 - our own bad choices

because we are all products of our choices!

We do suffer from our choices, whether they be good or bad. We either have choices that are positive or choices that are not so good. We learn from them! But God also sends trials as He sees fit for us to grow and overcome and to be perfected the way He wants us to.

"...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance, and endurance *brings forth* character, and character *brings forth* hope. And the hope of God

never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us” (vs 3-5).

These things that are made available to us by God are designed to help us. They are the pathway in the mechanisms for us to tap into to be able to overcome, into being God’s Kingdom. This is a work that we do in conjunction with God the Father and Jesus Christ. The fuel that makes it possible is the indwelling of God’s Spirit within us.

How can flesh and spirit have a relationship? *It’s through the indwelling of God’s Spirit within us!* All that imputed righteousness that comes from God again connectivity by the indwelling of God’s Spirit.

The relationship that we have with the spirit realm is made possible through this grace, through this loving blessing of a personal relationship with God made available to us. We were brought into it!

Verse 6: “For even when we were without strength... [this is how important it is to Them]: ...at the appointed time Christ died for *the* ungodly.”

You recognize it as a statement inclusive of all of God’s creation. all of mankind. This is where God has offered to us a blessing.

Verse 10: “For if, when we were enemies, **we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son...** [if that was the case, it says]: ...much more *then*, having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by His life.**”

So, you understand now the significance of the covenant that we committed to in the resurrected Christ; that ***His resurrection is our hope!***

Verse 11: “And not only *this*, but we also boast in God **through our Lord Jesus Christ...**”

The key for us as human beings and all mankind is the death of Christ; the most important link for us to have eternal life. ***Through Him:***

- we have that access to the Father, through Him
- we have that access to grace through Him
- we have that access to the Holy Spirit and all the other things that we’ll talk about here in a moment

“...by Whom we have now received the reconciliation” (v 11).

That condition left by Adam and Eve has been erased, and we have been reconciled back to God. Adam and Eve sinned. They were put out of the Garden of Eden; put away from the presence of God. ***But here Christ has reconciled us!***

Here is a wonderful revelation of knowledge and understanding right here:

Verse 12: “Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and by means of sin *came* death...”

We all know that we shall die, but we also know that flesh will sin. That’s why we have a propitiation for sin. We have an ever returning sacrifice for sin. Flesh is incomplete; physical bodies are subject to sin. Because of that *death came!*

“...and in this way death passed into all mankind; *and it is* for this reason that all have sinned, for before *the* Law, sin was in *the* world. However, sin is not imputed when law does not exist; nevertheless, **death reigned from Adam until Moses**” (vs 12-14).

There, again, having the perfect righteous commandments of God defined, codified and written so that all mankind could have the ability to see them, starting with the nation of Israel. For God revealed to them these perfect righteous Laws.

But from Adam until Moses—even though mankind existed and may have been cut off from God—it says:

“...death reigned from Adam until Moses, even upon those who had not sinned in the likeness of the transgression of Adam... [Remember: Adam knew he was not deceived] ...who was a type of the *One* Who was to come” (v 14).

So, we have Adam having left us in this situation and condition of death.

Then we have Christ, the Savior, Who rescues us. He comes and puts in place a means by which we can be rescued from that, saved from that.

“...which *is* by the One Man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many?” (v 15).

We never met Adam, but we’re subject to his choice. Christ revealed Himself for us, and He tells us to have faith in Him, that His work is going to make possible life for us from death. So, it applies, and it abounds unto many.

Verse 16: “And *should* not the free gift *be* like that which came by *the* one who had sinned? For on the one hand, judgment *was* by one unto condemnation; but on the other hand, the free gift *is* by *one* to *the* justification of many offenses.”

- ever-atoning sacrifice
- a propitiation for sin
- officiating as High Priest and advocate
- sending back the Holy Spirit
- working in our lives

- placing His Holy angels around us to be an aid in time of trouble
- to guard us against the demonic world that we live in

Verse 17: “For if by the offense of the one man death reigned by the one, how much more shall those who receive the **abundance of grace**...”

There is so much given from God through Christ, through this grace!

“...and the **gift of righteousness**...” (v 17),

- there is a right standing with God that is imputed
- there is a righteousness that is by the Law, and commandment-keeping, living a righteous life

We understand that there are two separate operations. Salvation comes through faith in Christ, but we practice, we live, we represent in our law to every degree possible within us, *a righteous life!*

But we know that we’re flesh and that we can fall short, but that’s why we have Jesus Christ there, to go to Him and pray for forgiveness of our sins in His blood. We are able to have that access to God the Father so that we can petition Him for the things we need.

Verse 18: “So then, even as by the one transgression condemnation *came* unto all men, in the same way also, by the one act of righteousness *shall* justification of life *come* unto all men.”

The resurrected Christ is alive today. He sits at the right hand of the Father, and He is working in our lives. We need to pay attention and understand that when we get off track, this relationship requires an active personal relationship with God. Contact every day and a walk every day.

Verse 19: “For even as by the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners.... [that’s true] ... in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* shall many be made righteous.”

Our being made righteous rather than every day, here we are in this relationship with God now.

Verse 20: “Moreover, the Law entered, so that transgression might abound...”

What does that mean? *So that we might see sin, that it may shine the light on sin, that it may be visible to us!*

We can see the magnitude of sin in our lives, personally, and in the world around us. That is the system and society that we live in. Sin today, transgression today, is abounding! We see it because God’s Law has defined what it is.

“...but where sin abounded... [or is abounding in this world, God, the Father, and Jesus Christ are still there] ...the grace *of God* did super abound” (v 20).

It is powerful as a solution and a cure to the law of sin and death within.

Verse 21: “So that even as sin has reigned unto death...”

When we pause and just think about that a moment, we see that God has this thing figured out. *It is us!*

- we need to understand it so that we can tap into it better
- we need to understand that to be where we need to be, where God wants us to be
- we need to understand this relationship with God
- we need to understand our relationship to sin, and how we can defeat sin by ourselves

There is no act or power that we can bring that can make us righteous before God in the way that we need to be righteous before God.

“...so also might the grace *of God* reign through righteousness unto eternal life **through Jesus Christ our Lord**” (v 21).

There is the solution. God has given us a solution!

Let’s get a little bit more here. Paul tells the brethren in Rome—making this point very clear—that flesh and fleshly things cannot justify one to eternal life.

Romans 7:1: “Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know law) that the Law rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?”

If you’re trying to achieve eternal life through law-keeping; in other words, you are going to conquer flesh yourself, you’re going to be so perfect that God is going to give you life. The perfection that you strive for is not to earn eternal life.

It is to celebrate the life that God has given you. It is to show your love and honor to God for having done all that he has done for you. But the Law is clear:

Verse 2: “For the woman who is married is bound by law to the husband as long as he is living; but if the husband should die, she is released from the law *that bound her* to the husband. So then, if she should marry another man as long as the husband is living... [we’re just talking about law

here] ... she shall be called an adulteress; but if the husband should die she is free from the law *that bound her to the husband*, so that she is no longer an adulteress if she is married to another man" (vs 2-3).

Verse 4: "In the same way, my brethren, you also were made dead to the *marriage law of the Old Covenant* by the Body of Christ..."

This is showing a magnification of God's Word. We are being released from a tutor guided by physical laws. We are being released from this elementary preschool kind of setting where we needed someone to hold our hands every day, to guide us every day, to make sure they say to us, 'Don't this, don't that.'

True, obedience is something that God wants us to have, but He wants us to grow in maturity as Christians to be able to have

- right judgment
- self-control
- self-governance

from the heart!

- not threatened with a rod
- don't touch
- don't this
- don't that

God wants us to grow up from that! Put on Christ! Become Christ!

"...by the Body of Christ in order for you to be married to another, Who was raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit to God" (v 4).

This relationship that we have now based on our commitment to God and baptism, receiving the Holy Spirit, brought up out of the watery grave anew in this New Covenant relationship with God.

Verse 5: "For as long as we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which *were* through the law, were working within our own members to bring forth fruit unto death."

The laws and commandments of God were revealing our imperfections, how we were falling short. It shows us, it showed us, the law shows us that we need Christ. The Law shows us that without Christ, we'll never be perfect.

Verse 6: "But now we have been released from the law, because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." *So, it isn't about do's and don'ts! It is about:*

- belief
- a relationship
- a way of life that we exist in

Our life is a life

- given unto righteousness
- given unto Christ
- given unto Holiness
- given unto sanctification for God's purpose and use

Verse 7: "What then shall we say? *Is the Law sin?....*"

That argument is in the world. Whether or not law is an important part of our relationship with God, the commandments of God are very much an important part of our relationship with God.

"...*Is the law sin?....* [No!] ...MAY IT NEVER BE!...." (v 7).

Wrong question; get that thought out of your mind; you're asking the wrong question. This isn't about law, **this is about your personal relationship with God!**

- Is it strong?
- Is it connected?
- Is it on point?
- Are you truly understanding who you are, how important you are to God?
 - ✓ He called you
 - ✓ He is working in your life

If you're walking around trying to see, 'Did I keep that commandment? Did I keep that commandment?' *You're missing the broader relationship!*

- Am I in good standing with God?
- Am I able to talk to God?
- Am I able to pray to God?
- Am I able to have a relationship with God? How is my relationship with God?

That's where our mind should be!

- Am I allowing God's Spirit to work in me?
- Am I overcoming?
- Am I growing in knowledge and grace?
- Am I praying every day for forgiveness of sin?
- Am I asking God to give me more of His Spirit and His holy righteous character?

That's where our thoughts should be!

Sinners is not something that should be a part of our conscious, because we have been raised anew in Christ. **We died to sin!**

That mistake that Adam and Eve made in the garden, **we've been saved from that!** But today we're still flesh! The genetic connection to sin is still there.

So, we have to ask God every single day for forgiveness, so that **we are being saved** every day through this grace that we walk in.

Through faith and continual commitment, ***we shall be saved*** at His return, ***IF*** we hold fast to this Truth, and we walk steadfastly in this way.

Paul says, v 7: “What then shall we say Is the Law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin except through the Law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except that the Law said, ‘You shall not covet.’”

Therefore, shining a light on this whole category of sin surrounding lust and covetousness. Again, you see the work of the Law there. It points and defines what righteousness is and what sin is.

Verse 8: “But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me every *kind of* lust because apart from Law, sin was dead.”

Didn’t mean that sin wasn’t existing. It was dead to you because you didn’t see it as sin. You didn’t recognize it as sin, but sin, I mean the violation of God’s perfect expectation for you, was still being violated.

It doesn’t mean that sin didn’t apply to you. If sin reigned from Adam until Moses, it was still having its application. People were still dying. But the Law reveals sins and makes it sinful. The Law reveals sin and makes it conscionable to us to recognize it so that we can go to Christ and have it forgiven. Go to Christ and go to the Father and tell Them that you see this and ask Them for Their help.

Verse 10: “And the commandment, which was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me.”

Yes, if you are violating it! If you are working against that expectation that God gives, the Law has no power in itself. The Law hasn’t the ability to do anything to you other than reveal sin for you so that you can have it repented of. How do you have sin repented of, forgiven, so that you can have a relationship with God? *It is through Jesus Christ!* Then we can come before God the Father.

- we have an audience with God again
- we’ve been reconciled to God again

Verse 11: “Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. Therefore, ***the Law is indeed Holy... [yes, it is] ...and the commandment Holy and righteous and good***” (vs 11-12)—*because it does good work; it does Its part!*

God sent the Law, gave the Law so that we could have it and know!

Verse 13: “Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin...”

Here’s the problem, within us is this law of sin. and again, *it is not unconquerable!* We can conquer it. ***Christ is the answer!*** So, we need to understand it.

“...But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good... [which is God’s Law doing that work of shining the light, defining the boundaries] ...was working out death...” (v 13).

You see, brethren, if we don’t get it right, the law that we incurred from Adam and Eve because of that choice they made, this flesh, it will die; not just death, ***it will die the death!***

“...so that by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful” (v 13). *Now we know the diabolicalness of sin and:*

- why we needed a Savior
- why we needed a propitiation for sin
- why we needed the righteous blood of Christ

Because sin is a part of this experience; so, we have to conquer sin!

When I say we, I don’t mean you on your own, by yourself, not you by your own effort. We have to conquer sin: ***me, Jesus Christ and the Father have to conquer sin in me! You, Jesus Christ and the Father have to conquer sin in you!***

That is put it away, defeat it, and that is not the law, but the sinfulness of the nature of man, the inclination of man to go against God, to be different from God.

I have met brethren whom God has really done some great work in their life, and I say it, and I’ve said, you know, I want to be like this Church member. I wish I had grown to the extent that they have.

Then they say to me, ‘Well, you know, I’m struggling just like you.’ ***It is a fight, and it is a collaborative effort between us, the Father, and Christ, and our yielding ourselves to Their work in our life!***

Verse 14: “For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin... [Paul understood this weakness,] ...because what I am working out myself, I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do” (vs 14-15).

- Why is it such a hard thing to be perfect like Christ?

- Why can't I be like Him?
 - ✓ I want to be like Him.
 - ✓ I want to do everything like Jesus Christ did.

Paul answers this for us; v 16: "But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the Law that *it is good.*"

This shows me that I can work it out with God the Father and Jesus Christ. It is revealing this to me, so I don't get so lifted up in myself.

Verse 17: "So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me; because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good. For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find" (vs 17-18).

It isn't the natural inclination of man to have that ability to just be able to be self-governing, to be able to be righteous of ourselves.

Verse 19: "For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me" (vs 19-20).

We have sin within this physical fleshly being that exerts itself, and it is the natural inclination of the flesh. Again, Adam and Eve gave us a situation that we needed help with, ***and Jesus Christ knew it!***

Verse 21: "Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me."

Again, I say why. I don't want that. But I'm flesh. That's who I am. That is a part of the existence in the flesh.

Verse 23: "But I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members." ***Recognizing who we are and why we need God!***

Verse 24: "O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death?"

Paul gives the answer; he understands the solution:

Verse 25: "I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with *my mind...*"

- I desire to do all of those things
- I am striving to live a righteous life

- I know there is benefit to righteousness in my life
- I know the commandments are good, perfect and right

"...but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin" (v 25).

Verse 24: "O *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death?" ***Yes, Jesus Christ is the solution!***

Romans 8:1: "Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit."

- led by God's Spirit
- standing in the righteousness of Christ
- reconciled to God
- justified before God
- given this wonderful Spirit of God to guide and keep us standing in grace; living in grace
- this relationship with God

You see how God has lifted us up and given us a foundation on which to stand, solid ground that we can navigate now to eternal life in the Kingdom of God, because every aspect of that is needed. ***Every aspect of that grace is needed here!***

Verse 2: "Because the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death."

So this relationship that we're in with God:

- we've got to stick to it
- we've got to hang on to it
- we've got to keep walking in hope

None of us are perfect. None of us will ever be perfect in the flesh. ***But we are striving and we stand in the righteousness of Christ, justified before God the Father, so that we can keep moving!***

We can pray and talk to the Father; we're not cast away. He doesn't turn His face from us. We come before Him humbly every day for what we need.

You can't get that from just the Law, knowing the Law, hearing the Law. You've got to recognize that we have to do what God expects us to do. God has called us to a way of life and a relationship with Him, and that's what we need to be striving for.

- our past life without God
- our past life without grace
- our past life without a personal relationship with God

That is what holds or kept us in bondage and in sin!

But today we have a relationship with God. We have what God has given us. Yes, Christ was sent as our Savior from this condition (Rom. 7).

The selection by God the Father is where it began. God called us. Paul said that God called him from his mother's womb. In other words, from the day that he drew breath as a human being child, God said, 'That one will be Mine for the purpose that I need him.

So I can say this idea of predestination prior to birth, you know, we've talked about that, but we know that once we became a human being, God could have selected us at that very moment.

We look back and we see the things that happened in our lives. We see God navigating us through all kinds of turmoil and things we say to ourselves. 'I should have been dead ten times over for all the things that God pulled me out of.' God has been working in our lives from the beginning, if you will, from the day that we draw breath. At least that was Paul's perspective here.

Galatians 1:1: "Paul, *an* apostle, not *sent* from men nor *made* by man, but by Jesus Christ and God *the* Father, Who raised Him from *the* dead; and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: Grace and peace *be* to you from God *the* Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for our sins, in order that He might deliver us from the present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father; to Whom *be* the glory into the ages of eternity. Amen." (vs 1-5). *So, we see that relationship there!*

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is. And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself... [that is our part, to be yielding and to be working actively to get sin out of our life] ...even as He is pure" (vs 1-3).

Verse 4: "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order that He might take away our sins; and in Him is no sin" (vs 4-5).

And that's why we are in Him, that's why we dwell in Him, because we need that sinless existence as He is. We are conjoined with Him. We

are conjoined with Him in His death and in His life. That is our walk today in Christ, by the strength and the power of God, through the Spirit, working in collaboration, in commitment to the Father and to the Son, doing those things that God has called us to do.

We have to stay in the fight. As we were instructed from God's Word just last night by Norbert, our beloved brother there, that this spiritual relationship is one of a growth mindset.

{Message: *Seeking a Spiritual Growth Mindset* by Norbert Bohnert}

God wants us to have, and that is what we're supposed to be doing, *growing!* Growing requires effort, commitment, work. For us, it's just not unlike any farmer, it is putting to practice those things which the good works of God:

- cultivating fields of righteousness
- cultivating to produce fruits of righteousness
- good seed
- good work
- preparing the ground
- yielding
- doing things
- crying out to God for the water in due season

That is the Holy Spirit to be given to us so that we can produce the fruit that God wants us to produce!

This *spiritual growth mindset* that God wants us to have is very important; it is very important!

Verse 6: "Everyone who dwells in Him does not *practice* sin; anyone who *practices* sin has not seen Him, nor has known Him."

So, you don't have God ***IF*** you're practicing sin, ***IF*** you're allowing sin to kind of stay at the edge,

This series that we're doing in understanding sin, the message is clear:

- we need to put sin far away from us
- we need to separate ourselves from sin
- we need to get away from it

But again, this flesh has a tendency to draw us back too close!

So, it is through the effort of each and every one of us that we're encouraging one another, and that we are really creating an environment in our fellowship and in our community as a church that sin is always cast out. *No sin allowed in these boundaries!* This is the relationship that we have:

Verse 7: “Little children, do not allow anyone to deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.”

This practicing of righteousness is the righteousness of the Law. then we’re righteous as He is righteous through faith, the righteousness of faith and the imputed righteousness that comes through faith in Christ.

Verse 8: “The one who practices sin is of the devil because the devil has been sinning from *the beginning.*” *True!*

Even before the Garden of Eden, Satan was sinning against his Creator God. Then for this purpose, the Son of God appeared that He might destroy the works of the devil:

- He did!
- He is!
- He will!

Verse 9: “Everyone who has been begotten by God does not practice sin, because His seed of *begettal* is dwelling within him.”

So, the Spirit tells us to stop. The Spirit says, the Law says, *that is wrong!* The Light of the Law shines upon that act as sinful.

“...and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. By this *standard* are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, and neither is the one who does not love his brother” (vs 9-10)

So, you see the unity within the fellowship. The effort on the part of everyone includes a loving relationship with God and Jesus Christ and one another. Jesus Christ bared that out very clearly in terms of what he expected of us. Our relationship with God is one of faith and repentance. We have baptism and receiving of the Holy Spirit, and then this journey of overcoming, because we have been sanctified by God.

So, this sanctification leads to reconciliation, which results in ***justification, righteousness, and ultimately the resurrection to eternal life!*** Christ conquered sin in the flesh, as Rom. 8:1-4, clearly defines.

We have access to grace, and we have access to the Father because of this wonderful work Christ has done. God’s faith gives to us in his Son Jesus Christ. His shed blood and the hope of eternal life, again, is in his Son. We need to always remember that God’s promises are sure.

In Lev. 17 we establish something very important regarding the symbols of what is now the

reality, the shadow of what is now the reality. Let’s look at this relationship that God had with the nation of Israel.

Leviticus 17:1: “And **the LORD spoke** to Moses saying, ‘Speak to Aaron and to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, “This is the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying, ‘Any man of the house of Israel who kills an ox or lamb or goat *for a sacrifice to the LORD* in the camp, or kills it out of the camp, And does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation to offer an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, blood guilt shall be charged to that man; he has shed blood. And that man shall be cut off from among his people’” (vs 1-4).

As it was with Cain and Nabal, it was brought to the door of the garden, here is the door of the temple to be presented and to be accepted.

Verse 5: “So that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them to the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to the priest, and offer them *for* peace offerings to the LORD.”

Again, you see the importance of the priest to be able to access forgiveness in the Holy of Holies as it was, they were in the temple where God dwells.

Verse 6: “And the priest shall sprinkle the blood against the side of the altar of the LORD *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savor to the LORD.” *Petitioning God, acceptance of God:*

- that He might have mercy
- that He might hear
- that He might respond

to what you’re praying for and asking Him for! We have a greater connectivity to God today than ever before.

Verse 7: “And they shall no more offer their sacrifices to goat demons, after whom they have gone whoring. This shall be a statute forever to them throughout their generations.”

We see the relationship, where else would you offer it except unto Satan. If God is here, this is where you need to be. You know where God is and you access the Father even through Him (Jesus Christ). He is above, for He sits at the right hand of the Father.

Verse 8: “And you shall say to them, ‘Any man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who are staying among you, offers a burnt offering or sacrifice.’”

There's only one God. There was only one access to that God at that time, and that is through the tabernacle. What was the tabernacle? *God had placed it in Jerusalem with His nation, with His people!* He dwelled among His people.

- Where is He today?
- Where is God today?
- Who has access to the Father today?

You now begin to understand the office that Christ holds and how important it is for us to stay in a right standing with God!

Verse 9: "And does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation to offer it to the LORD, even that man shall be cut off from among his people."

Who are the people of God; the people of God where God dwelt. Accessing God meant joining yourself to His people. He dealt with nobody else, no one else. *Today, that door is open for all of us to access through his Son!*

- no difference
- no division
- no separation
 - salvation
 - hope
 - forgiveness
 - answered prayer
 - life is in Christ

Verse 10: "And any man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that are living among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that soul who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people, for the life of the flesh *is* in the blood.... [God is clearly looking forward in regard to His overall plan for us] ...And I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for yourselves..." (vs 10-11).

Do we understand the preciousness of the blood of Christ? the reality today.

We're not talking about bulls, goats and sheep. We're talking about the man—God in the flesh, the One Who made us—came and died so that we could have access to the second forgiveness through His blood.

Verse 11: "**...for it is the blood that makes an atonement for life.**"

Verse 12: "Therefore, I [God] said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that is staying among you eat blood'—*because it represents that precious blood of Christ!*

Verse 13: "And any man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that are living among you, who hunts game, beast or fowl that may be eaten, he shall even pour out its blood and cover it with dust; for *it is* the life of all flesh. Its blood is for the life of it. Therefore, I said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not eat the blood of any flesh; for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.' And anyone who eats that which died of itself, or a torn thing, whether one of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until sunset. Then he shall be clean. But if he does not wash, nor bathe his flesh, then he shall bear his iniquity'" (vs 13-16).

Again, we are recognized in the preciousness of the blood and its proper representation in our relationship with God. That was all physical there. ***But God has given us His Son!***

God's Law, yes, is perfect and it contained the things that are more excellent being given by God for instruction in righteousness. God's Word is given for us, for our instruction so that we can be instructed in it.

Romans 15:4: "For all the things that were written before were written for our instruction, so that through patient endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

I hope that this knowledge of the weakness of the flesh and the great purpose for which God sent His Son, and the relationship that we have with Them through grace, in the operation of grace, reconciliation, justification, all these strong doctrinal understandings that we have, and we are growing in our understanding of will help us to see that the law of sin and death within this physical body can be overcome.

God is working it out with us. Yes, He is working it out with us. He expects us to walk in His ways, and in His instruction! This is very important for us to understand. He wants to redeem us from the corruption that is in this world through lust. ***He wants us to change from within!***

Let's see what Peter had to say regarding this: 1-Peter 1:1: Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ..." (vs 1-2).

You see this access that we're privileged to, and I say ***privileged!*** That means that God, through

His grace, has called you and made this accessible to you now.

“...Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us” (vs 2-4).

Yes, God has a plan, and His purpose shall be fulfilled!

Verse 5: “Who *are* being safeguarded by the power of God through faith for salvation *that is* ready to be revealed in *the* last time.”

You can read the rest of the chapter, but God is working out a wonderful work in us.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy *and* well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service.”

Do we have a work to do? Yes! We are to be committing ourselves eagerly, diligently doing those things, ***exercising righteousness, exercising faith, living a life representative of God*** in the Kingdom that He has called us to.

Yes, God has called us to a standard of living that is His standard, what He calls the Divine nature of God. ***Godliness is what God has called us to!***

Verse 12: “*Be* rejoicing in hope. *Be* patient in tribulation. *Be* steadfastly continuing in prayer.”

Amongst other things here that are included. This is a diligent connectivity to God is what’s being defined here in Rom. 12. So, our calling then continues in these acts. God has not called us to live a life of licentious conduct or the licentious conduct that we see in this world. We see it everywhere. It is all around us.

2-Peter 2:1: “But there were also false prophets among the people, as indeed there will be false teachers among you, who will stealthily introduce destructive heresies...”

Be alert! Be mindful! All around us within the Church, in the world, *it will come!* It’s going to come against you.

“...personally denying *the* Lord who bought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves. And many people will follow *as authoritative* their destructive ways; *and* because of them, the way of the Truth will be blasphemed” (vs 1-2).

- hold on to the truth that you have
- hold on to God’s way
- hold on to your connection with God

They’re going to take care of you and protect you from all this weird crazy stuff that we see in the world. ***The great transformation of God is underway in our lives now!***

He has called us to Holiness, ***and He wants us to be Holy as He is Holy!*** The Holy conduct that God wants us to have, and the imputed righteousness. They are two separate things.

So yes, we have a part that we play in living a Holy righteous conduct, living and striving to live a Holy righteous life before God. Then we have the righteousness of God imputed to us. So again, all of this is designed to keep us in the right place with God.

We are expected by our God to live a life as representatives of the Family of God. He wants our lights to shine. The apostles were ambassadors for Christ in this Gospel of Truth!

We—as His begotten sons and daughters, His lights in this world—***are to let our lights shine!*** Christ tells us we have to represent Him and the Father

Matthew 5:14: “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a mountain cannot be hid. Neither do they light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand; and it shines for all who *are* in the house. In the same way also, you are to let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father Who *is* in heaven. Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill” (vs 14-17).

That is the power of God’s way. His Law defines what it is that is being fulfilled. It defines when you fall short. But it’s the power of God that makes the fulfillment possible. We need God’s power, His love, and His work in our life. We need to be doing that which he expects of us, fulfilling His purpose for us.

Verse 18: “For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled.”

This is where God wants us to be! Therefore, He says:

Verse 48: “Therefore, **you shall be perfect**, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.”

That perfection is achieved ***by God’s work in you.*** God has set before us:

- life and death
- blessings and curses
- Light and darkness

He wants us to cultivate spiritual fruit, and not the works of the flesh!

When it's all said and done, when everything finds itself against you, it feels like you're going against the world all by yourself. Take note of this in Christ's own words:

John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation. But be courageous! I have overcome the world."

Matthew 11:25: "At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for it was well pleasing in Your sight *to do* this. All things were delivered to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*. Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest'" (vs 25-28).

So, to see the relationship there for us. He says very clearly and we should hear and take comfort in this. He says to us:

Verse 28: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest."

He says, 'Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly and heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.'

Verse 30: "For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light."

There is one stronger than us, brethren, there is one mightier than we are. We should keep our eyes on Him so that we are able to make it. Jesus Christ didn't stop fighting for us at the cross. He still fights for us today as a resurrected Son of God, High Priest, a propitiation for sin, advocate, and strength in our life.

Let's keep our eyes on Christ and the great work He and the Father are doing in our life!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 5:1-6, 10-21
- 2) Romans 7:1-21, 23-25, 24
- 3) Romans 8:1-2
- 4) Galatians 1:1-5

- 5) 1-John 3:1-10
- 6) Leviticus 17:1-16
- 7) Romans 15:4
- 8) 1-Peter 1:1-5
- 9) Romans 12:1,12
- 10) 2-Peter 2:1-2
- 11) Matthew 5:14-18, 48
- 12) John 16:33
- 13) Matthew 11:28-30

Also referenced: Message: *Seeking a Spiritual Growth Mindset* by Norbert Bohnert

AJ:bo
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