"THE FUNCTION OF GOD'S LAW"

Romans 7:7-13
2-9-2020

INTRODUCTION:

***We need to realize the function of God's Law!**

What does God's Law do?

I. The Law EXPOSES Sin (v. 7)
(The Law reveals the essence of sin)

II. The Law AGGRAVATES Sin (v. 8-11)
(The Law reveals man's proneness to sin)

A. Sin sees the Law as a challenge to overcome (v. 8)

B. Sin is awakened by the Law, as an alarm clock revives one who is unconscious (v. 8b-9)

C. Sin uses the Law as a means to deceive the ignorant (v. 10-11)

III. The Law MAGNIFIES Sin (v. 12-13)

The Law magnifies sin in two ways:

A. The Law reveals the opposite of sin (v. 12)

B. The Law reveals the sinfulness of sin (v. 13)

"THE FUNCTION OF GOD'S LAW"

Romans 7:7-13
HRM – 2-10-2024

INTRODUCTION:

***We need to realize the function of God's Law!**

What does God's Law do?

I. The Law _____ Sin (v. 7)
(The Law reveals the essence of sin)

II. The Law _____ Sin (v. 8-11)
(The Law reveals man's proneness to sin)

A. Sin sees the Law as a _____ to overcome (v. 8)

B. Sin is _____ by the Law, as an alarm clock revives one who is unconscious (v. 8b-9)

C. Sin uses the Law as a means to _____ the ignorant (v. 10-11)

III. The Law _____ Sin (v. 12-13)

The Law magnifies sin in two ways:

A. The Law reveals the _____ of sin (v. 12)

B. The Law reveals the _____ of sin (v. 13)

"THE FUNCTION OF GOD'S LAW"

Romans 7:7-13
2-9-2020

INTRODUCTION:

V. 7

"Is the law sin?" - This question comes upon the heels of Paul's previous statements about the inadequacy of the Law to make one spiritual. After showing the law's inability to produce Godly fruit (7:4, 5) [rather, the law stirred up (instigated) our rebellious sin nature to produce the fruit of death (v. 5)], and after showing the law's inability to give us power to serve by (7:6) -- Paul now anticipates the question: "Is something morally wrong with the law?"

Even though the Law is powerless to make one spiritual, it is not profitless! it has a function.

***We need to realize the function of God's Law!**

What does God's Law do?

I. The Law EXPOSES Sin (v. 7)
(The Law reveals the essence of sin)

The word "sin" appears 9 times in verses 7-14. It is the word hamartia - which means "to miss the mark"; to fail to reach God's standard that He has set.

"Known sin" - known (ginosko) - an experiential knowledge. To progressively gain an awareness about something.

"known lust" - known (oida) - a conceptual knowledge. To have an intuitive full knowledge of something.

Paul is saying: "I would not know what was and wasn't sin, if it was not for the Law showing me right from wrong."

How does a student realize his academic shortcomings? He compares his SAT or ACT scores with the national average.

How does a person realize he is overweight? he compares his weight with what his weight should be for his height.

"For" = for example - I could not comprehend what lust (wrong appetites or desires) was, if I did not have the tenth commandment. Ex. 20:17 - "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's."

The law is like a mirror that reveals the inner man and shows us how dirty we are (James 1:22-25) (Wiersbe, p. 535).

NOTE: Paul chooses "coveting" because it is an inner attitude rather than an outward action like the other nine commands. Most people never realize their own proneness to this sin, because they do not know God's law. They are comparing themselves by another standard.

The reason we know that adultery is wrong is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14).

The basis upon which we can say that abortion is sin, is because God's law says: Thou shalt not kill (murder)" (Ex. 20:13).

We know that teen-age rebellion is wicked is because God's law says, "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Ex. 20:12).

The reason why we know cursing is sinful is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7)

The reason why we know that homosexuality is an abomination is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Lev. 18:22).

The reason why we know that taking extra long breaks at work; cheating on your income tax, or neglecting to pay your debts is in, is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not steal" (Ex. 20:15).

When the "Judeo-Christian ethic) is removed out of a society, the society is bound to deteriorate!

[NOTE: However, man still has the word of the law written in his heart (Ro. 2:15), which restrains man from destroying himself and keeps society from going extinct]

1. The Law makes one conscious of His sin (SEE Rom. 3:20)

2. The Law reveals man to be a transgressor (SEE Gal. 3:19)

   It was added "because of transgressions. . ." (i.e. so that sins might be shown to be transgressions).

3. The Law teaches everyone their need for Christ (SEE Gal. 3:24).

II. The Law AGGRAVATES Sin (v. 8-11)

(The Law reveals man's proneness to sin)

A. Sin sees the Law as a challenge to overcome (v. 8)

ILLUS: How a child (or adult) will be tempted to do something just because it is forbidden.

EX: Signs saying, "Wet pain - do not touch" or "Wet cement - do not walk" actually inspire the rebellious to intentionally leave their mark.

V. 8

Man, being totally depraved and rebellious, by nature does things often for no other purpose than to defy God and His standards. There is something appealing to carnal man about those things which are outlawed.

EX: "Stolen waters are sweet, (says the harlot) and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Prov. 9:17).

--The Law teases man's innate appetite for wrong.

--The law stirs up (instigates) our sin nature.

--The law aggravates our rebellious hearts.

--The law brings out our anti-God-ness

"Sin" is like a punk kid saying, "Go ahead, dare me to do it." So the reply comes: "I dare you to do it!" And then after "sin" has been given its challenge (the law), it goes wild.

"Sin" is personified as someone who is looking for trouble" Someone who is "looking for a fight." (conflict). Sin is pictured as "trouble looking for a time and place to happen." Someone who is waiting for an "occasion" (opportunity, starting point) to rebel.

Man's sin nature is stirred up by prohibition, because at the center of sin is selfish pride, which has been waiting to assert itself.

"Taking occasion" (cp. v. 8)

Sin wastes no time, but seizes the opportunity that the prohibition provides.

"Wrought" = worked out; brought about

"All manner" = every (kind)

"concupiscence" = lust (same word as in v. 7)

The command not to lust makes one lust more.

Sin is pictured as a pig that dives into all kinds of mud and filth. Man's old nature has the potential of all kinds of illicit cravings (lusts).

"For without the law, sin was dead"

In what way was sin dead?

ANSWER: The sin nature is not dead, but acts of sin are. No one can miss the mark if no mark exists.

The capability of sin is living, though the opportunity to sin is missing.

The principle of sin is living, but the practice of sin is not.

The potential to miss the mark exists, though the practice of missing the mark did not occur without the mark being established.

B. Sin is awakened by the Law, as an alarm clock revives one who is unconscious (v. 8b-9)

V. 8
"Sin is not imputed, when there is no Law."

"Sin is dead" - lying dormant. Fast asleep awaiting a challenge (law) to conquer.

Paul is no doubt reflecting on his own experience as a child or a time prior to his becoming conscious of moral responsibility (Thomas, p. 186-7).

V. 9
The Law wakes up the sin already in the heart.

If there was no prohibition, attention would not be drawn to certain things to the magnitude that it is once it is forbidden.

Sin is revived (it regains vitality and strength) when it is challenged. "The strength of sin is the law." (I Cor. 15:56).

NOTE: When sin faces God's law in the boxing ring of life, God's law does not lose. Sin does! And we die. "The wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23).

C. Sin uses the Law as a means to deceive the ignorant (v. 10-11)

V. 10

"Ordained to life" Lev. 18:5 - "Ye shall therefore keep my statues, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD."

(cp. Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12)

The commands which would have brought life (if kept), ended up in death (because they were not obeyed).

No one breaks God's law and gets away with it!

NOTE: It's not the commandment that causes death (cp. v. 13), rather it's man's sin nature that breaks His commandments that causes death.

V. 11

Sin is personified as the tempter (Robertson, p. 368)

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" (James 1).

"Sin is a deceiver" - When the law says "Don't", sin whispers in our ear: "God must be withholding something good, something desirable, something beneficial from you." (EX: Satan to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:4b-5).

Man's sin nature is drawn by the apparent attractiveness of that which is forbidden. But always remember, it is a trap! It is a lie!

Beware: Sin is a deceiver!

Heb. 3:13 - "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (cp. Eph. 4:22).

III. The Law MAGNIFIES Sin (v. 12-13)

The Law magnifies sin in two ways:

A. The Law reveals the opposite of sin (v. 12)

"The Law" in its entirety, and the "commandment(s)" in particular is holy. How do we know? Because its Author is holy!

Since God is holy, just, and good, anything that comes from Him is also holy, just, and good.

Since the commands come from God, they must be holy, because He is holy!

(cp. v. 14) "The Law is spiritual."

"The Law is just" (it's right). God never commanded anything that was not right according to His standards of rightness.

"The Law is good" (it's beneficial). SEE verse 16

I Tim. 1:8 - "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully"

NOTE: The law is good because it shows man his sin
(I Tim. 1:9-10).

If the law sparks man's rebelliousness, should we do away with the law? (EX: many think about legalizing drugs, or relinquishing the discipline of children).

ANSWER: NO! Law is good because it shows man his true nature. it reveals to man his sinfulness, depravity, and desperate need for God's mercy and grace.

B. The Law reveals the sinfulness of sin (v. 13)

Paul is saying: The law is not a cause of death.

Sin kills - Law does not!

"Sin that it might appear sin..." - "Appear" = to be shown or manifested.

"Sin...exceeding sinful" - when someone breaks a known law, their sinfulness is magnified beyond measure.

Sin is more sinful when you knowingly violate a clear command (it would be better not to know the law and break it, than to know it and still break it - EX: degrees of punishment in hell).

If I owned an apple orchard (or banana plantation), it is wrong for someone to go onto my property and steal my fruit. However, if I put up a sign saying "Do not steal the apples - No Trespassing, etc.", and you go ahead and steal anyway, (having fully known the prohibition), you are even more guilty! And your rebelliousness is magnified that much more.

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Ja. 4:17).

"The law entered that the offence might abound" (Ro. 5:20) - that is, so that our awareness of our sin might abound.

Unsaved people know that there is such a thing as sin, but they do not realize the sinfulness of sin. Many Christians do not . . . so they excuse it (or rename it - "Mistakes, weaknesses") (Weirsbe, p. 536).

CONCLUSION:

1. Understand God's Law

Know its intent is not to save but to show you that you need salvation.

When understood: God's law tells the sinner something is wrong in his life.

God's law is like a stick plunged into a stream. it shows the direction of the current of our lives (cp. Thomas, p. 188).

2. Uphold God's Law

a. Teach God's N.T. commands to your children and others

Why do not more people see their need for Christ?

ANSWER: They do not see their sin.

Sin is not hammered in pulpits across this country like it once was, therefore. People do not see themselves as law breakers; and consequently they see no need for Christ!

b. Obey God's commands daily

NOTE: Remember, you do not have the strength in your flesh to obey it!

(This is Paul's point in the following paragraph - 7:14-25)

Focus your energies on loving the one you are married to [Christ - v. 2-4] and He [via the Holy Spirit - 8:1] will give you the power to bring forth fruit (Jn. 15:1ff) and fulfill the true essence of His law (Mt. 22:39; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14).

Happy, therefore, is that man who has come to the end of himself, his own ideas, his own efforts, his own determination to be saved (or sanctified) by his own attempts and works, and has acknowledged his utter sinfulness, his hopeless inability and has thrown himself upon Christ as "the end of the Law for righteousness" (Thomas p. 189).