

Sermon-Based Small Group Study Guide

Sunday, April 21st, 2024

“Why Strut with Turkeys When God Created Us to Soar with Eagles”

Romans 7 – Bro. Tim Brigham

Message from Sunday, April 14th

Verse of the Week: Memorize and Meditate on Romans 7:24-25a

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK: The Law is good but it does not exist to provide a way to God through perfect obedience. The Law exists to show us that there is NO way to God apart from the grace of Jesus Christ.

Monday – The Law: Awakens us to sin, Arouses us to sin – Read Romans 7:5, 7-9

Romans 7:7 underscores that the law is not sinful but rather serves to reveal sin. The Law exposes sin, making it recognizable. The Law helps us accurately identify sin. We would not know right from wrong if it weren't for the Law. For example, coveting is revealed as sin through the law. The Law sets God's standard for right behavior and exposes wrong behavior.

Romans 7:8-9 reveals a disturbing truth about our nature; when we are told not to do something, we immediately want to do it. Every parent who has ever told their child, “Don't touch that!” and then watched their child immediately move to do exactly what they were told not to understands this fully.

“Forbidden Fruit”: In Galveston, Texas, there was a hotel overlooking the Gulf of Mexico. Despite signs prohibiting fishing from the balcony, guests would cast their lines into the waters below. When the management removed the signs, the fishing stopped. Similarly, Augustine, the renowned theologian, reflected on human nature's attraction to the forbidden. He recalled a pear tree near their vineyard laden with fruit. One stormy night, he and his friends stole the pears not to feast upon but to experience the thrill of forbidden fruit. Romans 7 illustrates this truth: Human nature tends to rebel against rules.

Understanding the Law and our natural response to it should help us to overcome our nature and be more obedient (and less rebellious) to the things God calls us to do.

Tuesday – The Law: Accuses us of sin, Arrests us in sin – Read Romans 7:14-23

Sin is missing the mark, but if there is no law, there is no mark to miss. The Law is not sin; it reveals sin. The Law is not evil; it reveals the rebellious nature that lives in each of us. The Law provides the basis for us to be accused and condemned as law-breakers. These are legal terms that would be used in a court of law where we are found guilty and sentenced with no hope of appeal or parole.

Paul saw himself as a **dead man**—dead in sin, dead under the law, and deserving of eternal death. His hopes of eternal life through obedience to the law died when he realized that no sinner can be justified by law deeds. The law reveals sin but cannot save.

God arrests us in our sin through the Law. To arrest means to stop or to check progress or a process. The Law arrests us or stops us in our sin; it stops the spread of sin in the believer. When a believer honestly evaluates himself against the righteous standard of the Law, he realizes how far short he falls. We cannot keep the Law and the Law cannot save. The Law cannot change you. The Law cannot empower you. It can only show you your guilt. For the man sinking in sin, the Law is not a lifeboat; it is an anchor.

Wednesday – Grace loves us out of sin – Read Romans 7:25

John 3:16 – God so loved that He gave His one and only Son. The Law cannot deliver us from this body of death, but God has made a way for us to be saved through His Son Jesus Christ.

Love does not save us; love causes God to move towards us. Love compels mankind to respond, but we are not saved by love. We are saved by GRACE. Grace is an action that comes out of God's love. Surrender is the action that comes out of our response to God's love through grace.

Since we've been called out of the Law into grace, why do we expect the lost to obey the Law in order to come to God? Our evangelism should call people to the grace that freed us from the Law and can free them from it, without expecting them to obey it

first. Our evangelism should also properly illustrate the love of God through His action of grace in Jesus life, death, burial, and resurrection.

Thursday – Grace looses us from the grip of sin - Read Romans 7:25

Who or what will DELIVER us from the body of sin? Jesus has done so through His work on the cross. As children of God, going back to Romans 6, we are free now to choose whether to live in the old nature or the new; whether to sin or not. We now have freedom to choose what master we will serve. The last part of verse 25 makes that clear.

Grace looses us from the grip of sin so that our minds and our bodies (actions) can work as one. We don't have to think spiritually and live worldly. We can think and live spiritually within ourselves while we must continue to live physically in the world. Remember Dr. Tony Evans telling the story of wide receiver Santonio Holmes in Super Bowl 43. He had to reach over his head to catch a high pass while keeping his feet in bounds to score the winning touchdown. We must likewise "reach high to receive our instructions" while at the same time "keeping our feet planted" where God has positioned us.

Friday – Grace lifts us above sin - Read Romans 7:25

Remember Tim's explanation of the Law of Gravity and the Law of Lift. According to the Law of Gravity, what goes up must come down. But with an external source of power and a correct shape, an airplane can overcome the Law of Gravity by the Law of Lift. God is our power source, our salvation shapes us rightly, and we can rise above our old sin nature to live for Him. Grace is God working in me to give me the desire to not live in sin, and the ability (the power) to lift me above a life of sin.

Remember the story of the eagle living among the turkeys. Spend your life with turkeys and you won't learn to fly, won't learn to see from a greater perspective, won't know the limitations you've accepted and the abilities you've lost. Remember that God has called you to Isaiah 40:31 – "Those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength. They will soar with wings like eagles." We are called and empowered to not only overcome sin but a few feet, but to soar miles above it!

Saturday – Read Romans 7:1-25 – Reread Romans 7 and review for Small Groups

The purpose of sermon-based small group study is to encourage and equip us to apply what we learn during weekly sermons into our daily lives through discussion. Scripture teaches that we are accountable for our obedience to Biblical teaching, just as our leaders are accountable to teach. Hearing the Word of God taught through the sermon and then applying it makes us mature disciples and examples (witnesses) to others (James 1:22-25).