

Romans 7 (2017)

- Moving ahead in our section exploring the ramifications of salvation by faith
 - Last week we studied the implications of our salvation for our spirit
 - We learned that our spirit has been made new in Christ
 - We now share His perfect spirit
 - And we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us
 - So as we live today, we are alive in Christ, spiritually new and forever changed
 - There are still many more profound consequences of having been born again spiritually
 - Paul is moving to explain those consequences in the coming chapters
 - Today, Paul covers two of these consequences
 - First, Paul looks at the consequences for our relationship to the Law God gave to Israel
 - Secondly, Paul looks at the consequences for our relationship with our own flesh
 - And as it turns out, these two ideas – the law and our flesh – are closely related
- Let's start with our first topic, which runs from vv.1-6

Rom. 7:1 Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?

Rom. 7:2 For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.

Rom. 7:3 So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

Rom. 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

Rom. 7:5 For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

Rom. 7:6 But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

- The opening of the chapter begins with a conjunction (or) so we know we're dropping into the middle of a thought that began at the end of Chapter 6
 - That chapter ended with Paul saying

Rom. 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Paul was contrasting two forms of bondage
- First, there was our previous bondage to sin
- We were born in the nature of Adam and that nature was fallen, sinful and incapable of acting contrary to its nature
- So in that sense we were in bondage to sin prior to coming to faith
 - We could compare it to someone born with a physical birth defect, like blindness
 - We might say such a person is in bondage to blindness, because they cannot escape its grip
 - Similarly, we are born with a spiritual defect, a fallen spirit
 - And we are all in bondage to sin because we cannot escape its grip on us
- But when we were born again by the Spirit of God, our old enslaved spirit was taken away and we were enslaved to God, Paul says
 - The Lord gave us a new spirit and He placed His own Spirit in us
 - Our new spirit is formed in the likeness of Christ and shares His perfect nature
 - And the Holy Spirit living in us assures us that what God has begun in us He will complete one day, bringing us a new body

- Now as a result we're enslaved to God, Paul says
 - He means we're enslaved in the same sense as we were previously
 - Today by faith we have a perfect sinless spirit, and like Christ it cannot sin
 - Furthermore, the Holy Spirit living in us will not leave us nor forsake us
- So we cannot escape these any more than we could our earlier condition
 - These things are not a product of the will
 - Before you came to faith, you didn't choose to be a sinner...it's all you knew how to do
 - And you didn't choose to receive Christ's Spirit...it was given to you by God resulting in your sanctification and eternal life, Paul says
- So to explain how this changes our relationship with the Law, Paul begins with an analogy in Chapter 7
 - He introduces that analogy by saying or do you not know...
 - We could say it this way: "As you already know..."
 - And notice he says he's speaking specifically to the Jewish believers in Rome
 - This first consequence is unique to Jewish believers, because only Jews were under the Law given to Moses
 - Paul says that the Law has jurisdiction over a Jewish person as long as he lives
 - The concept is simple to understand for a Jew
 - The law God gave to Israel came as part of a covenant, the Mosaic Covenant
 - Obviously, only those who were party to that covenant were bound to follow its Law
 - You could compare it to a man or woman enlisting in the military

- As a recruit enlists, he or she enters into a contract with the government
- And the recruit then becomes subject to military laws and regulations
- Only someone who has enlisted is bound to follow these laws
- And when the enlistment contract expires, the person is freed from that law
- Similarly, when Israel entered into the Old Covenant at Mt. Sinai, they obligated themselves and future generations of Israel to follow the Law
 - But in the case of a covenant, the terms are binding until death
 - There is no expiration or cancellation with a covenant, because all covenants are for life
 - So in order for a covenant to end, a death is required
- And Paul is explaining this principle using the example of a covenant of marriage
 - In v.2 Paul says that if while a woman's husband is living she is joined to another man (i.e., remarries), then she shall be called an adulteress
 - A marriage is a covenant, and like all covenants, it can only be broken by death
 - Nothing else ends a covenant
 - So if while a spouse is living we marry another, we are committing adultery
 - That's why Jesus said this, in speaking of marriage and divorce:

Luke 16:18 "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.

- But Paul goes on to say that if a husband dies, the woman is free to remarry
 - His death has ended their covenant and makes possible a new covenant without adultery

- This is why marriage ceremonies still include the declaration that what God has joined no one may separate
- Society may prescribe legal ways to dissolve a marriage but God doesn't submit to the decisions of our local county judge
- Working from this principle, Paul now makes his application to the Jews' relationship to the Law through the covenant given by Moses
 - The Jewish people are bound to God to the terms of the Mosaic Covenant, particularly the Law and all its requirements
 - That covenant remains in effect until there is a death
 - And for as long as that covenant was in place, it acted to condemn any who couldn't follow it perfectly
 - It was a ministry of death, Paul says in 2 Corinthians
 - So to free us from the condemnation of God's Law, God acted in our place to die, thereby putting an end to the covenant for those who are in Christ
 - When Jesus died, we were seen to die with Him spiritually
 - By grace through our faith in Jesus, God put our spirit to death
 - And a new living spirit came in its place
 - At that point, our old person was gone, dead
 - And because our old self died, we were no longer a part of the Mosaic Covenant and subject to the Law of Moses
 - That death put an end to the covenant and to the Law the covenant required
 - Like the military recruit ending his enlistment...the military laws and regulations no longer apply
 - Remember, Paul prefaced this section saying he was speaking to those who know the law, that is to the Jew in the church
 - For Jews who wondered why they could dispense with the Law simply because they accepted Jesus as Messiah, Paul says it's because you died

- They had literally escaped the covenant that was formed by their forefathers on their behalf
- The covenant has been ended for their sake through their faith in Jesus
- He has completed all the terms of the Law and His death puts an end to the covenant for the sake of those for whom He died
- Gentiles are equally free from the Law, because we were never under that covenant in the first place
 - No Gentile was party to the Mosaic covenant
 - But we are held to God's standard of holiness
 - In other words, we don't need to be party to the Mosaic covenant to be accountable for our sin
 - Remember what we learned in Romans 2

[Rom. 2:11](#) For there is no partiality with God.

[Rom. 2:12](#) For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law;

- Having the Law and being bound to the Mosaic Covenant doesn't offer a person any advantages in terms of righteousness
 - Because that law only served to convict us for our unrighteousness
 - It lacked the power to compel us into righteous living
 - So on that day of eternal judgment, Gentiles and Jews alike will be convicted for their sin, regardless of how much of God's law they knew
- But for the Jew, the issue of their relationship to the Mosaic Law was important, because it defined Jewish life at every level
 - Paul is explaining a life in Christ opens the door for a Jew to live an entirely new life of freedom from the Mosaic Life
 - And that's a big deal to any Jew

- It's also a big deal to the Gentiles entering the church, since some Jews were intent on making Gentile converts practice Jewish law (and this continues even today)
- But all Paul is saying is that the Law is no longer in effect, because our death in Christ frees us from that covenant
- Notice in v.4 Paul says we were made to die to the Law through Christ
 - Our separation from the covenant of Law isn't optional, it's not something we have to agree to
 - The covenant has ended because we have been made to die to it
 - Like a woman who has been widowed by her husband's death
 - Her marriage ended the moment of her husband's death, because the covenant ended at that moment
 - We could say she has been made to be single again
 - Now, that woman could continue to live as if she were married
 - She could continue to wear a wedding band
 - She could call herself "Mrs...."
 - She could refuse to seek a new husband
 - But these things are merely pretending
 - Likewise, some Jews in the church will continue living under the Law, or parts of it, voluntarily, but they do so for their own sake, not for God's
 - God has not placed them under that obligation
 - In fact, through Christ's death God has freed them from that obligation
 - And that's why Paul tells the church elsewhere not to be deprived of their freedom by agreeing to be subject to the Law unnecessarily

Col. 2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

Col. 2:21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!"

[Col. 2:22](#) (which all refer to things destined to perish with use) – in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

- Notice again in Colossians, Paul mentions our having died with Christ
 - That death freed us from the covenant of Law or any reason to take it up
 - And so he asks why the church has submitted itself to following the dietary and cleanliness rules of the Law?
 - These rules were merely commandments of men and therefore not of God, he says
- So in v.6 Paul says that we are released from the Law, so that we might serve God in a new way – by the Spirit
 - This statement summarizes the first consequences of salvation for our flesh or body
 - We are now serving God in a new way
 - Before faith in Christ, a Jew was instructed to serve God by accomplishing the requirements of the Mosaic Covenant
 - Doing works of the Law was the spiritual service required by everyone bound by that covenant of Law
 - But now having been freed from that Law, we serve God in a different way, following the leading of the Spirit Who directs us
 - The old Law written on stone is no longer our guide
 - In its place, we have a law written on our heart, so to speak
 - We have the mind of Christ and the Spirit of God
 - We have a sinless spirit from Christ
 - So you either serve God through one system or the other
 - Either you are under the Law and follow those rules
 - Or you are freed from the Law and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit
 - One came through the Old Covenant and one through the New Covenant

- That's why Paul says in v.4 that we were freed from one to be joined to the other, because to mix the two is equivalent to adultery
 - Being in two covenants is like having two husbands
 - Therefore, Christians have no business mixing observance of the Old Covenant law with following Christ in the New Testament
 - We can observe an occasional ritual as a memorial or teaching example (like conducting a Seder meal at Passover)
 - But we should not submit to a lifestyle of Law keeping because to do so suggests we are still bound to that covenant
- So the first consequence for our body is how we serve God now
 - Having come to faith, we serve Him according to our new spiritual life
 - That new spiritual life is boundless in its opportunities
 - Under the law, only certain men could be priest and serve God in the tabernacle
 - But now we are all priests, representing God before men
 - Peter calls all believers a royal priesthood
 - And we are no longer called to serve Him according to set rituals that never change, as was the case under the law
 - Instead, we are serving Him according to what we find in the truth of God's word and from the leading of the Spirit
 - That's what Jesus meant when He said:

[John 4:23](#) "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

[John 4:24](#) "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

- Before moving to the second consequence for the body, Paul stops to address an obvious question that emerges at this point in his teaching
 - Back in v.5 Paul says that while we were in the flesh (meaning still unbelieving) sinful passions in our flesh led us into sin

- Those passions were already at work in the members of our body, meaning in the way we lived in the body
- Our body lusted and drove us into one sin, after another
- And when the Lord gave the Law to men in Israel, it only served to focus those passions
 - Remember, the sinful nature of humanity is set against God
 - So as God defined for us what was holy, it gave opportunity for the sin nature in our flesh to focus its opposition
- And that raises a question: is the Law a cause for sin then?
 - Was the Law the source of our sin because it directed our sinful nature?

Rom. 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet."

Rom. 7:8 But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.

Rom. 7:9 I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died;

Rom. 7:10 and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me;

Rom. 7:11 for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

Rom. 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

- As expected, Paul says the Law is not sin but is actually the opposite
 - The Law is the definition of holiness, not a recipe to sin
 - Paul says he came to know what sin was in him because the Law gave it a name
 - For example, the urge to covet was always a part of man's sin nature
 - But only after the Lord defined coveting in the Law, only then did men understand it as sin

- Notice that Paul used one of the Ten Commandments as his example
 - And in the same context, Paul refers to coveting as part of the Law
 - That means that when Paul says we are not under the Law, he is also including the Ten Commandments
 - We are not bound to the Law of Moses in any part
- Now, having a definition of what was sin, our fallen nature had a target and it took opportunity to violate that rule at every turn
 - This is the pervasive nature of sin working in our flesh
 - Our sin is a force of nature, literally
 - It has its own drive, its own goals, its own master
 - This force used to define the nature of our spirit, and even now it still lives in the members of our physical body
- It's not a mental process, but it influences our thinking; it's not a physical force, but it influences our feelings and actions
 - It's a spiritual force that lives in the members of our body, independent of our spirit
- You can see the moment this force came into being in Genesis 3

Gen. 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Gen. 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- When Adam and Woman sinned, they put into effect the word of God promising spiritual death
 - They both immediately changed in their spirits, becoming fallen creatures
 - And that change produced a new, evil spiritual force in their bodies

- That spiritual force recognized it was an enemy of God and under a sentence of death
- And it immediately came to influence the thinking and actions of the Man and the Woman
 - First, both their eyes were opened, which is a way of describing the arrival of evil into their spirits
 - They were no longer innocent and unfamiliar with sin and evil
 - Now they knew it intimately, and in that sense their eyes were opened
- Next, they sensed they were naked
 - They had always been without clothing but that reality was of no concern before this moment
 - But now they were experiencing a sub-conscience change
 - Their fallen spirit was now an enemy of God and under judgment
- That spiritual vulnerability manifested itself as a physical vulnerability and shame, which caused them to seek covering
 - This wasn't a matter of culture...it was instinctive
 - Of course, the need for physical cover is a reflection of their need for spiritual covering, the covering of Christ's blood
 - Later, when God entered the Garden they felt the need to hide from Him, knowing Him to be their adversary
- From that point forward, humanity has shared this sense of God as our enemy and that we are vulnerable to His judgment
 - We see men fall in fear when in the presence of the holiness of God
 - And we are always set against the things of God
 - Yet we are also ignorant of God, so until God tells me what He approves, my flesh is unaware of what to oppose
 - That's what Paul means in v.8 when he says that apart from the Law, sin was "dead"
 - He means it wasn't aware of what to oppose

- That particular sin was dormant, just waiting to be aroused in the day when it learned what God condemned
- Conversely in v.9, Paul says he was “alive” apart from the Law
 - He means he was ignorant of his own sin
 - Alive means self-righteous, thinking himself approved by God
- But then as the Law is made known in his heart, Paul says two things happened
 - First, sin became alive
 - It was awakened to the possibilities of opposing God, like a sleeping lion aroused by an intruder
 - Once your flesh understood God said we couldn’t covet, we suddenly want to covet all the more
- And secondly, Paul’s conscience came to understand he was vulnerable before God for that sin
 - Like Adam and Woman in the Garden, Paul suddenly felt guilt and condemnation for coveting
 - That feeling was his spirit instinctively knowing that he would be held accountable to God for the coveting he was doing
- So the Law was a commandment explaining the way to holiness, but its effect in a fallen person’s nature is to bring us to death
 - It excites the part of us that brings us under condemnation
 - For the fallen part of our nature, it becomes a roadmap for how to sin more
 - Paul says in v.11 that sin (speaking of our flesh) took opportunity through knowing of the commandment, to bring us into more of the same
 - It deceived us in that it causes our heart to move in a direction that is inherently hurtful to our own best interests
 - Like the original life in the Garden, our sinful nature will tell us that what is evil is good and what is good is evil

- The effect of this deception is to bring us into death, both spiritual and physical
- Paul summarizes his explanation of the law in v.12: the law is holy and its instructions to us are holy and righteous and good
 - The problem isn't the Law itself
 - The problem is how our sinful flesh responds to such instructions
- This background leads Paul to the second major consequence of salvation for our body in the next passage

Rom. 7:13 Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.

Rom. 7:14 For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.

- Paul moves his line of reasoning one step further...he asks can we say that the Law being good is still to blame for causing our death?
 - Paul says the cause of death was not the Law, but rather it was sin itself
 - We die because of sin, not because a Law exists that we violate
 - Paul says the law gives us opportunity to see how sinful we truly are
 - It shows how evil we are that we turn something good into something leading to death
 - We were always sinful, but by giving us His Law God showed men how utterly sinful we are
 - We could say the Law is a light, but if so it's like the light of an open flame
 - And our sinful nature is like a pool of gasoline in our heart
 - So that as the light of that Law comes to us, it ignites our passions to oppose God and sin all the more
 - We don't blame the Law, we blame the response of our heart

- Now, all this talk of the Law and its strange power to excite our fleshing rebellion introduces a new and important theological principle
 - This principle is a corollary to the one we learned last week in Chapter 6
 - Last week we learned that by faith in Jesus we gain a new spirit, one that is sinless and perfect
 - So that as we experience sin in our lives, that sin isn't originating from our spirit
 - It's originating from some other place
 - And now we're learning that the source of our sin is our flesh
 - Paul says in v.14 that the Law is spiritual
 - It has a spiritual source (God) and it describes the perfect nature of the divine, as Jesus said only God is good
 - To keep the Law is to share in the nature of God
 - But then Paul says we are of flesh, meaning our spirit coexists with a fallen sinful body
 - And this union of perfect spirit and sinful flesh results in ever-present warfare
 - It's spiritual schizophrenia
 - We have two opposite personalities now
 - We have Christ's spirit and Adam's body
 - It's like sharing the backseat on a long road trip with your older sibling
 - It's like Donald Trump taking Hillary Clinton to the prom
 - It's like brushing your teeth and drinking orange juice
 - It's like half golden retriever, half poodle
- So a consequence of salvation by faith is that our spirit is reborn, but for a time our body remains unchanged, leading to spiritual conflict
 - Paul describes the conflict in the next passage

[Rom. 7:15](#) For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.

[Rom. 7:16](#) But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good.

[Rom. 7:17](#) So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

[Rom. 7:18](#) For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

[Rom. 7:19](#) For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

[Rom. 7:20](#) But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me

- Paul speaks of himself to describe the experience of every Christian
 - First, we see ourselves sinning and we wonder why we still have this desire to do the wrong thing
 - Paul says in v.15 that we do things we don't understand
 - You know that feeling...it usually hits you right after you've done or said something you shouldn't have done or said
 - We aren't practicing what we want to do and we're continuing to do the very things we hate
 - He's describing the frustrations we all know of living with a sinful nature
 - But Paul is asking us to think again about what we're experiencing in those moments
 - In v.16 he says if I do something I don't want to do, then I'm showing that I agree with God's law and confessing it's good
 - My dislike for my own sin is evidence that my spirit shares the mind of Christ
 - Previously I wouldn't have felt that way, and in fact, I couldn't have felt that way before I was born again
 - And this recognition leads to an important conclusion: I'm not the one seeking to sin but sin dwelling in me is driving that behavior
 - When Paul uses the first person pronoun (me, I), he's referring to our new spirit in Christ
 - It's the part that agrees with the Law and confesses it's good

- So I (my spirit) is not the one doing the sin, as I said last week
- It's impossible for our spirit to sin, because we were given Christ's sinless spirit when we were born again
- But then where is the desire to sin coming from? All that's left is our body, our flesh, which Paul calls "sin"
 - Paul says in v.18 that sin dwells in my physical fleshly container, my body
 - That container is absolutely, 100% sinful
 - Nothing good dwells in it, Paul says
 - It is the source of my desire for doing wrong and it is opposed to my spirit
 - The result is that the willing to do good is in "me" (my spirit) but the actual doing of good is often fleeting
 - Christians will struggle with living in ways contrary to our confession
 - As Paul neatly summarizes in v.19...we do not do the good we want, and we do the evil we do not want to do
 - How is this even possible? Why aren't we in control of ourselves?
 - The answer in v.20 is that there are two sources of power working in us
 - Your spiritual will and your physical will
 - Your spiritual will wants what God wants, while your physical will wants what the enemy wants
 - It causes you to go against your own wishes
 - It gets its way because you listen to its desires and give in to its requests
- That leads to a principle

Rom. 7:21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

Rom. 7:22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,

[Rom. 7:23](#) but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

- Since we can see plainly that we do things we don't want to do, then we have our proof that those desires are not our true self
 - They are a part us, for now, but they are *not* us
 - Evil is something that is present in us even as we want to do good
 - In my spirit, Paul says, I love what God loves and want what God wants
 - But in my physical body, I find a source of evil that is actively opposing my efforts to follow God and serve Him
- It isn't merely a bad influence on me...it's more significant than that
 - It is actively working against me
 - It's a foreign invader, a virus, something that fights back
 - Paul says it makes me a prisoner, preventing me from completely escaping sin
- So with what we learned from Chapter 6 and now what we've learned from Chapter 7, we have powerful insight to do battle
 - We know that we have all we need for pleasing God living in us
 - I don't need laws written on stone, I don't need ritual or religion
 - I just need the word of God and the Spirit of God, because inside me I have the perfect mind and will of Christ
- But I also have an enemy living in me, an enemy that always wants to do the opposite of God's law
 - That force is never at rest
 - It's at war with my spirit, and it tempts me into lusts of one kind or another
 - And it wants me to fail in my service to God

- I'm a prisoner of this enemy because he lives in my physical body, and obviously I can't exist on earth serving God without that body
 - Yet I'm not without defense in this battle
 - The stronger my spiritual will grows, the more control I can exert over the physical will
 - And Paul will talk more about that in the next chapter
- Meanwhile, he finishes this chapter with the ultimate question, the one we would all ask at this point: how can I get rid of this stupid, evil body?

Rom. 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

Rom. 7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

- We are wretched in this present state
 - We're all like a walking Greek tragedy
 - We've been equipped to know what God wants and given a desire to please Him
 - And yet we're shackled to a body dedicated to opposing Him
 - It seems like a recipe for frustration
 - But in reality it's a temporary situation
 - Paul says we need someone to set us free from this body of death, meaning a body that just wants to lead us into sin
 - And he follows with thanks be to God that this is exactly the plan, through Jesus Christ
 - For just as Jesus gave us a new spirit, He will also one day bring us into a new body
 - This is the hope of our faith; our hope of resurrection
 - All believers from all time look forward to this coming moment, when we receive a new body
 - The Bible teaches that each distinct group of saints throughout history will receive their new body at the same moment

- All Church saints receive their new bodies in a single moment at the rapture
- And all Old Testament and Tribulation saints receive their bodies at Christ's Second Coming
- Our resurrection is the moment of our glorification, but even before that moment, we will be freed from the scourge of this body
 - At our death, when our spirit leaves this body behind, we enter into the presence of Christ in heaven, Paul says in 2 Corinthians
 - The only thing standing between us and Heaven is our sinful body
 - Once the body is gone, our spirit can enter Heaven, which proves that our spirit is sinless already
- Finally, Paul summarizes the main point of the chapter in v.25
 - With my mind (or we could say with our spirit), we serve the law of God through our life lived in Christ
 - But through our flesh, I'm serving the principle of sin, that is opposition to God
 - So when you sin, you're seeing your flesh winning the day
 - When you live in holy and pleasing ways, you're seeing your spirit in control
 - Watch for which one is winning the day more often, and you'll have a measure of how sanctified you are in your walk with Christ
 - The life goal of every Christian should be to build up the spiritual strength of the spirit and to discipline the flesh
 - In working on these things, we bring glory to Christ
 - We show His love to other people
 - And we serve Him faithfully as His ambassador
 - That's the mission of every Christian life, and it begins with understanding how the war is fought and won