

The Law Shows Our Sin — Jesus Sets Us Free

Scripture: [Romans 7:1-13](#)

Big Idea:

Jesus freed us from the Law, and the Law shows how much we need Him.

Call to Action:

This week, when God's Word or God's Spirit shows you sin in your heart, stop and ask God for HELP!

Family Action:

Familiarize yourself and your children with God's Law. [Exodus 20:1-17](#).

There are 613 commandments in the covenant God made with Israel, as found in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible).

Exposure to Exposition & Exploring the Scriptures: (15-20 mins)

- Bible Drills (Memorization of OT & NT Book order)
- Guide the children to [Romans 7:1-13](#) in the Bible. (Help them as needed, NT vs OT)
- Say: We are going to continue through Paul's letter to the church of Rome.
- We will learn that the gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes, and we should never be ashamed of Jesus.
- Read aloud. (Ask kids to start their pointer fingers on V1 and follow along)

Review:

vv. 4:1-12 Old Testament Proof for being saved by faith (Abraham's Faith)

vv. 4:13-25 God's promises come by faith, not by works. More Proof from Abraham's life.

vv. 5:1-11 Because of Jesus, I'm made right with God. Praise God!

vv. 5:12-21 Sin came through Adam, Life came through Jesus

vv. 6:1-14 The old self is dead, buried, and raised to new life through Christ!

vv. 6:15-23 Once a slave to sin, now a slave to righteousness!

vv. 7:1-13 God's Law is good—our sinful nature is the problem.

Opening Question

What do you think it means to be "free" in Jesus? → Let kids explore this and give their thoughts and ideas.

Notes:

Paul will explain here that before we believed in Jesus, God's people had to live under lots of rules (the Law).

But when Jesus died and rose again, He made a new way for us to live — through His Spirit! We are united in Jesus' death and resurrection.

ROMANS 7:1-13 NLT

Now, dear brothers and sisters—you who are familiar with the law—don't you know that the law applies only while a person is living?

2 For example, when a woman marries, the law binds her to her husband as long as he is alive. But if he dies, the laws of marriage no longer apply to her. 3 So while her husband is alive, she would be committing adultery if she married another man. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law and does not commit adultery when she remarries.

4 So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God. 5 When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death. 6 But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit.

7 Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet." 8 But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power. 9 At one time I lived without understanding the law. But when I learned the command not to covet, for instance, the power of sin came to life, 10 and I died. So I discovered that the law's commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead. 11 Sin took advantage of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me. 12 But still, the law itself is holy, and its commands are holy and right and good.

13 But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my death? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation to death. So we can see how terrible sin really is. It uses God's good commands for its own evil purposes.

Notes:

Jesus is speaking to the Jews about the Law given through Moses. The Law was meant to show God's people their sin, set them apart from other nations, and serve as a covenant (promise)—one they agreed to keep perfectly, accepting punishment if they failed. A Biblical covenant is lifelong. Death sets you free from the agreement.

- V1-3 Death ends a covenant. Marriage is a picture of a contract ending at death.
 - The Law was like a contract — a set of rules that told people how to live.
 - Once someone died, that contract no longer applied.
 - Paul used marriage as an example: a wife is bound to her husband while he's alive, but when he dies, she's free to remarry.
 - In the same way, when Jesus died and we believed in Him, our old life under the Law ended too.
 - **Kid Point:** Jesus' death frees people from the old Law so we can belong to Him. (Those to the law apply)

Key Theological Term:

covenant- It's not just any promise—it's a strong, unbreakable agreement where God says what He will do, and the people agree to follow Him. There are consequences for breaking your part of the covenant.

[ROMANS 7:4](#) So, my dear brothers and sisters, this is the point: You died to the power of the law when you died with Christ. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, we can produce a harvest of good deeds for God.

- V4 United with Christ
 - When Jesus died, our old self died with Him.
 - When the death occurred (when we believed), we were freed from the law, like in marriage.
 - Now we belong to Jesus — like a bride belongs to her husband.
 - Jesus made us new so we can live in a way that pleases God (“bear fruit”).
 - This fruit means good things come from our life: kindness, love, obedience, and joy.
 - **Kid Point:** We died with Christ, setting us free from sin. Raised to new life. Now we can serve God!

[ROMANS 7:5-6](#) When we were controlled by our old nature, sinful desires were at work within us, and the law aroused these evil desires that produced a harvest of sinful deeds, resulting in death. ⁶ But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit.

- V5-6 Jesus' death freed us from the Law, so now we serve God through the Spirit!
 - Before we knew Jesus, our hearts wanted to do wrong.
 - The Law showed us what sin was, but it couldn't change our hearts.
 - In fact, once the law was shown to His people, sin became more obvious.
 - Now, the Holy Spirit helps us live in newness of life.

- We don't obey because we have to — we obey because we want to out of love for Jesus.
- **Kid Point:** I serve God with love, not fear. Freed from sin, law, and death!

[ROMANS 7:7-8](#) Well then, am I suggesting that the law of God is sinful? Of course not! In fact, it was the law that showed me my sin. I would never have known that coveting is wrong if the law had not said, "You must not covet." ⁸ But sin used this command to arouse all kinds of covetous desires within me! If there were no law, sin would not have that power.

- V7-8 The Law reveals sin's power over my body and feelings.
 - God's Law is not sinful — it reveals what sin really is.
 - Paul didn't even know coveting was wrong until God said, "You shall not covet." (From the 10 commandments)
 - The Law is like a mirror: it shows the dirt on our face, but it doesn't cause the dirt.
 - Our sinful nature uses God's commands as opportunities to rebel — when God reveals the rule, our flesh pushes against it.
 - **Kid Point:** The Law shows us our sin.

Key Theological Term:

Covet- To covet means to want something that belongs to someone else so much that you're not content with what you have. It's more than just liking something — it's wanting it in your heart in the wrong way.

[ROMANS 7:9-11](#) At one time, I lived without understanding the law. But when I learned the command not to covet, for instance, the power of sin came to life, ¹⁰ and I died. So I discovered that the law's commands, which were supposed to bring life, brought spiritual death instead. ¹¹ Sin took advantage of those commands and deceived me; it used the commands to kill me.

- V9-11 Freed from the power of sin by Jesus!
 - Before the Law, sin was "quiet," but when the command came, sin "woke up" and wanted the opposite of what God said.
 - "Alive apart from the Law" means Paul once felt okay (before he believed and knew God's word)— he thought he was doing fine.
 - When he understood God's commands, he suddenly realized, "I'm a sinner!"
 - His sinful nature reacted like a lion being poked — it came alive and wanted to rebel.
 - Sin "deceived" him, just like the serpent deceived Adam and Eve.
 - The command that was thought to bring life instead showed him he deserved death. It was never obeying the law that made people right with God. It was their heart to please God by following His

law.

- **Kid Point:** God's law helps us see the need for a Savior.

[ROMANS 7:12-13](#) But still, the law itself is holy, and its commands are holy and right and good.

13 But how can that be? Did the law, which is good, cause my death? Of course not! Sin used what was good to bring about my condemnation to death. So we can see how terrible sin really is. It uses God's good commands for its own evil purposes.

- V12-13 The law is Holy and shows us how sinful we really are.
 - God's Law is not the problem — it is holy, perfect, and good because it comes from God.
 - The Law shows us what sin really is, like turning on a bright light in a dark room.
 - Our sinful flesh reacts to God's rules the wrong way — instead of obeying, it wants to rebel.
 - Sin “uses” the Law to stir up wrong desires inside us (like gasoline reacting to fire).
 - So inside us there is a battle:
 - Our new spirit from Jesus wants to obey,
 - Our sinful body wants to go the opposite way.
 - Kid Point: Our sin is shown when lined up to God's holy Law.

Observation Questions (What did it say?)

1. According to Paul, how long does the Law have authority over a person? (*As long as they are alive. v.1*)
2. What example does Paul use to explain being released from the Law? (*Marriage — when a husband dies, the wife is released from that covenant. v.2-3*)
3. What does Paul say the Law helped him recognize? (*The Law helped him know what sin was (like coveting) v.7*)

Understanding Questions (What does it mean?)

1. Why are believers “dead to the Law”? (*Because when we believed in Jesus, our old “self” died with Him, ending our connection to the Law. v.4*)
2. Is the Law bad because it makes us aware of sin? (*No. The Law is holy and good — it just reveals how sinful our flesh is. v.12*)
3. What does sin do when it hears God's commands? (*Sin uses the command to stir up more sin inside us. v.8*)

Application Questions (What should I do?)

1. Who was the Law of God for, and are you held to the Law? (*His chosen People- Jews/ No, Gentiles aren't held to the law, but the Law is still useful in showing us how sinful we are*)

2. When God's Word shows you sin in your heart, what should you do? (*Confess it and ask God to help me obey Him instead of my flesh. [1 John 1:9](#) — If we confess our sins, He is faithful... to forgive.*)
 3. How can remembering that God's Law is good help you make better choices? (*It reminds me that God's rules protect me, and that sin hurts me. Also shows me the need for a Savior! v.12*)
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Activities

1: Object Lesson

The Mirror vs. The Cleaner

Based on [Romans 7:1-13](#), the Law shows our sin, but Jesus cleans our hearts.

Supplies Needed:

- A mirror (or several hand mirrors)
- Dry-erase markers (dark colors work best)
- Paper towels or wipes
- Optional: A spray bottle with water (labeled “Jesus”)

Directions:

1. Show the Mirror

- Hold up a clean mirror.
- “The mirror shows what’s on your face, but it cannot clean your face. That’s like God’s Law. It shows us our sin, but it cannot remove it.”

2. Let the Kids “Write Sin”

- Have each child take a dry-erase marker and write a word like: (lying, being selfish, disobeying, fighting, being unkind)
- “These words represent sin — our hearts without Jesus.”

3. Try to Clean It With the Mirror

- Ask the kids: “Can the mirror clean itself?”
- Let them try to “clean” the mirror using only the mirror. (It won’t work!)
- “The Law can SHOW your sin...but it can’t REMOVE your sin.” (Just like Romans 7 teaches!)

4. Bring Out the “Jesus Cleaner”

- Spray the mirror with water and wipe it clean.
- “Only Jesus can wash away sin. The Law shows us the dirt — Jesus removes the dirt!”

5. Repeat With Different Words

– Allow kids to try again: Write sins → mirror can't clean → Jesus cleans.

Reflection:

“God’s Law is like a mirror. It shows us what’s wrong on the inside — but it can’t fix it. Jesus is the One who washes our hearts clean. That’s why we need Him!”

[Romans 7:12](#) — “The Law is holy and good.”

[Romans 7:6](#) — “But now we serve in the new way of the Spirit.”

2: Memory Verse

Come up with moves

[Romans 6:23](#) *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

3: Discussion

For Older Youth students, see separate printable handouts.

Remind them: What is the Gospel?

Jesus’ perfect life paid for the sins of all who believe. Jesus died on the cross as the punishment for sin. But Jesus did not stay dead, three days later He rose to life (resurrection) defeating the power of death. Believe, and you will be saved!

- We are all sinful. We all deserve the consequence of sin- death.
- Jesus is what saves us from the sin we all have in our bodies. And one day, he’ll even give us a new body.

Supporting Truths Kids Can Grasp:

- When we believed in Jesus, our “old self” died. ([Romans 7:4](#))
- We now serve God in a new way — by the Holy Spirit. ([Romans 7:6](#))
- God’s Law is good because it shows us what sin really is. ([Romans 7:7,12](#))
- Sin lives in our flesh and reacts against God’s commands. ([Romans 7:8](#))
- Seeing our sin shows us how much we need Jesus. ([Romans 7:9-11](#))