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MINISTRIES

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Pauline Paradox: Part 4 – Which Law Paul?

But we are not under the law, we are under grace!

This is a phrase we hear almost every day!

You may have heard it or perhaps even said it yourself.

What?!? You keep God’s dietary commandments found in Leviticus 11?

But we are not under the law, we are under grace!

What?!? You remember and observe the 7th day Sabbath?

But we are not under the law, we are under grace!

Yet, if we were to say...

We believe and teach that stealing is against the Law of God...

Therefore, we don’t steal...

Why don’t we hear?

But we are not under the law, we are under grace!

Or... We believe murder is against the Law of God...who is then going to tell us...

But we are not under the law, we are under grace!

That would be silly, wouldn’t it?

Clearly, we should still follow God's Law. So, what did Paul mean when he said this in Romans 6:14...

Romans 6:14

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

This is usually how the interpretation goes...something like this...

“There is an old Law of God that Moses wrote, and now there is a new Law of God through Christ. The previous law was one of works and earning salvation, and now we are under grace.”

This understanding is allegedly supported by Paul's letters, yet Paul also told us to “test everything.”

We will continue to do just that...we will test this interpretation of Paul.

It is true that God's people are under grace now, but they weren't under grace before our Messiah came?

Not at all, we were under grace before, during, and after Moses received the law at Mt. Sinai.

Genesis 6:8 (NKJV)

But Noah found **grace** in the eyes of the LORD [YHWH].

Exodus 33:12 (NKJV)

Then Moses said to the LORD [YHWH], “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ But You have not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found **grace** in My sight.’”

Exodus 33:16 (NKJV)

For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found **grace** in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.”

Proverbs 3:34 (NKJV)

Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives **grace** to the humble.

Jeremiah 31:2 (NKJV)

Thus says the LORD [YHWH]:

“The people who survived the sword
Found **grace** in the wilderness—
Israel, when I went to give him rest.”

It is not difficult to see that grace was not a new concept.

It is not that those in the time of Moses or before did not need Yeshua's work on the cross. They most certainly did.

It was simply a future event allowing God to extend grace to all believing generations.

And the fact that one might follow the Law of God as written by Moses does not mean that they are forfeiting grace.

So, we cannot deny that Paul is talking about how we are not under the law, but under grace. At the same time, we must realize that he cannot be saying that the Law of God as written down by Moses is contrary to grace.

As we showed in earlier installments of the Pauline Paradox series, both Messiah Yeshua and Paul practiced and taught the law of God as written down by Moses.

Not being “*under the law but under grace*” cannot be understood to mean that we do not need to follow the Law of God.

What then, did Paul mean exactly?

Romans 6:14

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Note that he says that “*sin will have no dominion over you.*”

Which means that at one time, sin did have dominion over us.

Meaning this, at one time, we were “under sin.”

Some might say, Paul is not talking about us not being “under sin,” but about us no longer being “under the law.”

And that is where the error happens.

Even though it is the exact same sentence, too many make the error that the first half of Paul’s sentence is about one thing, and the second half is about something else.

How many have heard the phrase in Biblical hermeneutics...context, context, context?

Context is everything...

Think about this for a moment...something about this law that we are not under actually relates to sin having no dominion over us.

The law that we are no longer under has something to do with also not being under sin.

That is the context before us, in the very same sentence.

Consider this...

What if Paul was referring to not being under the Law of God in Romans 6:14...Did Paul mean that we are not under the Law of God because we are not under sin?

If it is the law of God that is no longer over us, that would mean that Paul is equating the law of God to

being sin.

Is the law of God sin?

You might be thinking, surely no one would consider the Law of God to be sin, however, that is EXACTLY what Romans 6:14 actually implies if we do not need to follow the Law of God.

Romans 6:14

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Anticipating this possible confusion, Paul appears rather used to being taken out of context. He actually asks this question in the very next chapter.

Romans 7:7

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

So, it is by the law of God that we can define sin.

The Bible instructs us that breaking the law of God is sin.

1 John 3:4

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.

Recall that Hebraically, the word “law” simply means “instruction.”

Thus, sin is an instruction that is against the Law of God.

If you wanted, like Paul, you could then call this instruction or law, “The Law of Sin.”

Later we will discuss where the instructions of sin come from.

Continuing on...

Sin, or breaking God’s instructions, leads to death. We learn this from the beginning.

Genesis 2:16-17

And the Lord [YHWH] God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Paul intentionally covers the same thing well before we even arrive to Romans 6.

Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—

Thus God, in Genesis, Paul, and in other places of Scripture, instructs us that following the “Law of Sin”

leads to death.

This of course would be another instruction, or law if you will.

Paul refers to this as the “Law of Sin and Death.”

If you are not following us just yet, please be patient with us, and we will lead up to Paul’s teaching on the Law of Sin and Death.

What we would like to propose is that Paul is introducing the concept of what is called the “Law of Sin and Death” in Romans 6:14, and that he is not speaking specifically of the Law of God in such context.

This would mean that Paul is not saying that we are not under the “Law of God,” as though we don’t have to obey God’s instruction. but instead he is saying that we are no longer under the “Law of Sin and Death.”

We would propose that when Paul is teaching that when we come into the faith, our Messiah’s death enabled us to be free from the bondage of sin. This allowed us to overcome death, thus...we are no longer under the law of sin and death, but under grace.

We are no longer under the “Law of Sin and Death.”

As we noted, the context is that we are no longer under the dominion of sin...and that has to do with a law that we are no longer under. Paul, then, specifically mentions something called the “Law of Sin” which is not only different than the “Law of God,” but the “Law of Sin” is actually the exact opposite of the “Law of God”, as Paul stated that sin is the breaking of the “Law of God. (Romans 7:7)”

Yet, many will still maintain that Paul is talking about the “Law of God” in Romans 6:14 when in fact, that is the exact opposite of the context presented to us.

Please note, that nowhere in Romans 6 does it specifically mention the “Law of God,” so we are forced to determine from context exactly which law or instruction Paul is referring to in Romans 6:14...and that can ONLY be accomplished through the examination of the immediate context.

So, please afford us the opportunity to reveal the context of Romans 6:14.

We already showed that the law Paul states that we are no longer under has something to do with the law of sin and its dominion or bondage over us.

Romans 6:14

[For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.](#)

In the same chapter, Paul states that death no longer has dominion over the Messiah, and thus likewise, we live, and death has no dominion over us as well.

Romans 6:8-9

[Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.](#)

Therefore, according to the context related to not being “*under the law*” we learn that both sin and death do not have dominion over us.

Sin and death are no longer over us...at least according to the context...

So, are we suggesting that Paul is not teaching that we are no longer under the Law of God, but instead, is teaching that we are not under the “*Law of Sin and Death?*”

Yes, that is exactly what we are saying.

There might be some who have simply heard, too many times, that Paul teaches that we are not under the law of God, but under grace. So we are going to allow Paul to just give it away here.

Make no mistake, the law that Paul says we are not under is made very, very clear for those who just keep on reading past Romans 6:14.

Paul concludes and summarizes this topic by saying this just a little later in the letter

Romans 8:1-2

There is therefore...(notice how the word “therefore” is used in a conclusive and summary fashion) ...*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua]. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] from the law of sin and death.*

This should make much more sense.

Grace is receiving forgiveness for breaking the law of God, which is defined as sin. Sin leads to death. Thus, being under grace means that we are free from the bondage of sin and the death that was to result from it.

Consequently, we are not freed from the “Law of God,” but instead, we are freed from the “Law of Sin and Death.”

It would make no sense to say that it is grace that is causing us to not be under the law of God. If there was no law of God, there would be no sin, since the law of God defines sin. And if there is no sin, there wouldn't be a need for grace.

This of course, once again, is Paul's whole point here:

Romans 7:7

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

If there was no law of God, there would be no sin. If there was no such thing as sin, we would not need grace in the first place.

Just like all of Psalm 119 teaches us, Paul is stating that the Law of God has value in pointing out to us what sin is and thus showing us the right way to walk...that the law of God is freedom and joy!

So, if context means anything, now we should all understand that Paul never said that we are not under the Law of God. We cannot say that Paul ever taught such a thing.

All we can say is that Paul taught that we are no longer under the “The Law of Sin and Death.”

If that review of Romans 6:14 was not that convincing to you, please be patient. We will be reviewing the Book of Romans in depth in the next part of this series. There is much more that can be said on that topic.

That was merely an introduction.

We wanted to discuss Romans 6:14 simply to demonstrate that until one understands that Paul spoke of many different laws, we cannot assume that Paul is always speaking of the law of God when he mentions the word “law.”

Paul makes mention of many “laws.” In fact, he makes mention of at least seven.

- 1) The Law of God (Romans 3:31; 7:22-25; 8:7)
- 2) The Law of Sin (Romans 7:23-25)
- 3) The Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2)
- 4) The Law of the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2)
- 5) The Law of Faith (Romans 3:27)
- 6) The Law of Righteousness (Romans 9:31)
- 7) The Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21)

As we discussed in part three of the Pauline Paradox Series, it is the Hebrew word “*Torah*” that became the word “*nomos*” in the Greek, or “law” in the English.

Torah, in the way Paul would have understood it being a Pharisaic Jew, simply means “instruction.”

Torah means to shoot an arrow in order to hit a mark.

The mark or target, of course, was the object at which the archer was aiming.

Consequently, Torah is, therefore, the arrow aimed at the mark; it’s what you’re shooting for.

The target is the truth about God and how one relates to him.

The Torah is, in the strict sense, instruction designed to teach us the truth about God.

Torah means direction, teaching, instruction, or doctrine.

That all makes sense in terms of the Torah of God, or Law of God...but what about these other laws that Paul teaches us?

Where do these instructions come from?

How do they relate to each other?

What do all of these “instructions” mentioned by Paul mean to us in the faith?

What are they supposed to teach us?

More importantly perhaps, why is any of this important to understand in the first place?

Because by understanding how Paul understands and teaches these various laws, one is then better equipped to understand the difficult words of Paul in other verses.

We need to enter into the mind of Paul, otherwise, Paul, like Peter said, will be difficult to understand, and we will make the error of lawless people.

In other words, we cannot understand Paul’s letters until we understand how Paul thinks.

That should make some sense.

This is very important and should be very evident now.

For so long, those in the faith have been told that Romans 6:14 taught us that we’re not under the Law of God, when in reality, it is teaching that we are not under the Law of Sin and Death.

How do we know this?

Because many teachers did not, and still do not, understand that Paul teaches on multiple laws, not just the Law of God.

There is a difference between the Law of Sin and Death that we are no longer under, and the Law of God that we are under. These are two very different laws.

It was not until we examined the context that it was revealed to us which of the seven laws Paul was referring to....and so many have mistakenly believed that Romans 6:14 was referring to the “Law of God.”

See how easy it would be to make the “error of the lawless” as Peter said?

So, before we examine each letter of Paul in detail and focus on the verses that have traditionally been used to teach against the Law of God, we need to understand the many “laws” according to Paul.

Nearly every instance in which Paul is teaching on the Law of God it is because Paul is addressing someone or a group of people in his letter that either misunderstood these various laws, or misunderstood the order or function in which these laws apply to individuals.

Thus, as we review these seven different laws, and reveal the interdependencies and relationships of each one...please keep in mind that we are presenting these as an overview only.

We will be constantly bringing up these seven laws as we proceed in detail through the rest of Paul’s letters.

So, even if after the presentation you don’t feel as though you fully grasp Paul’s understanding and

presentation of the seven laws, that is ok.

Consider this a warmup, to help you proceed through Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, etc.

What this means is that we ask you to not expect that this presentation of the seven laws of Paul is all-inclusive or complete.

It is merely an introduction to prepare you for the remaining parts of this series.

However, by the time that the Pauline Paradox Series ends, the seven laws of Paul, and how Paul understands the law of God, should be very clear in your mind as we will be covering these seven laws quite often.

Let's look at these again:

- 1) The Law of God (Romans 3:31; 7:22-25; 8:7)
- 2) The Law of Sin (Romans 7:23-25)
- 3) The Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2)
- 4) The Law of the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2)
- 5) The Law of Faith (Romans 3:27)
- 6) The Law of Righteousness (Romans 9:31)
- 7) The Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21)

Notice how most are listed in the letter to the Romans. For that reason, the letter to the Romans is the first letter of Paul that we will be addressing in the Pauline Paradox Series.

Thus, it simply makes sense for us to cover the different laws of Paul so that when we review Romans in depth, we can better appreciate what Paul is attempting to teach.

Here is what we will discover about Paul's understanding of these seven laws, or seven instructions, that all in the faith have faced and are facing. We will present an overview first, and then more detail afterwards.

THE INSTRUCTION OF GOD

- 1) Quite often, we simply refer to this as the Torah of God, or Torah for short. The Law of God defines what is sin and what is not sin. This instruction comes from God. To do the law of God is obedience. To break the law of God is sin. This of course, leads us to the second instruction, the Law of Sin.

THE INSTRUCTION OF SIN

- 2) The Law of Sin is something we all followed before we came into the faith. This instruction comes from ourselves, or more specifically, it comes from our flesh. It is our flesh nature that hates the law of God. This nature is the desire to do things our own way instead of God's way. After we come into the faith, there is a battle inside of us between the Law of God and the Law of Sin. The Spirit in us directs us or instructs us toward the Law of God. The flesh directs or instructs us toward the Law of Sin that is against the law of God. At the resurrection, the Law of God will finally completely prevail over us and the battle and internal struggle between the flesh and spirit will be over for us. The race will have been run and won. However, before that happens, we are in sin, and sin leads to death. This leads us to the next instruction, the Law of Sin and Death.

THE INSTRUCTION OF SIN AND DEATH

- 3) The instruction of the flesh, or sin, leads us to death, and this is known as the Law of Sin and Death. We were all under the law of Sin and Death before we enter the faith, yet we did not realize it at the time. Our flesh calls the Law of Sin freedom, when in reality, sin is bondage, and it is bondage that leads to death. The instruction of sin from our flesh leads to the instruction from God that demands our death because of our sin. We live our lives under the Law of Sin and Death until we have a desire for truth; that desire comes not from the flesh, but from the Spirit. This of course, leads us to the Law of the Spirit.

THE INSTRUCTION OF THE SPIRIT

- 4) The Law of the Spirit tells us that the Law of God is truth once it is heard. It leads us toward the law of God, and away from the instructions of the flesh. The Spirit exposes the flesh and its natural predisposition for sin. Thus, it is the moment when the Law of the Spirit enters into us that we immediately realize we are under the Law of Sin and Death. It is then that we realize that we are in prison and in bondage to our own sin. We then understand that we are in a hopeless state. Once we realize that we are in prison, we desire a way out. We look to God for the way out. The Spirit, or desire for truth and desire for freedom, causes us to establish the faith in our Creator and his eternal and authoritative unchanging Word. This then, leads us to the Law of Faith.

THE INSTRUCTION OF FAITH

- 5) The Law of Faith is to conform your way of thinking to the Word of God. Paul refers to this as becoming the new man. In the faith, one adopts the Word of God as the authority over their lives. It is contrary to the flesh as your authority, which sees the Word of God as bondage. This is not a mental assent, but in fact, a transformation of our core beliefs and foundation that directly impacts how we perceive the world and interact with it. In obedience to the Law of Faith, we see the Word of God as freedom and the way to live. It is also once we enter into this faith, and run the race in the faith, that we are granted eternal life through his grace. It is our internal transformation and spirit or desire for his Word that leads to salvation from the Law of Sin and Death. This is occurring before we even do anything, which also demonstrates that salvation is not a matter of works, but a new creation in us. However, that new creation in us causes us to want to practice righteousness, which of course leads us to the Law of Righteousness.

THE INSTRUCTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

- 6) The Law of Righteousness is the instruction to live out our faith, it simply means to practice righteousness. It is the doing of the right ways of God. This is an effect of our faith. Because we believe the Word of God to be truth and the right way to live, our lives should resemble living righteously. This is in contrast to living in the flesh, which is after our own ways, which are like filthy rags to our Creator. YHWH's ways are righteous, and the righteousness we practice is the evidence or fruit of our faith. This righteousness, or right way to walk out the Law of God, has been evidenced in the lives of many throughout the ages. The most popular is through Jesus Christ, or in Hebrew, Messiah Yeshua. This leads us to the Law of Christ.

THE INSTRUCTION OF CHRIST (MESSIAH)

- 7) The Law of Christ is his instructions, as an example, to follow the Law of God in the faith. Our Messiah never once spoke his own instructions from his own authority. He simply repeated and practiced the valid interpretation of the eternal unchanging Word of God that has existed since the beginning. It is in Yeshua that all of these laws are reconciled and understood. Yeshua taught us the Law of God as the truth. He pointed out our sin, teaching us that our sin leads to death. He told us that we need to be saved from the Law of Sin and Death. For that to happen, we need to listen to the

Spirit to enter into the faith in the Word of God. Our Messiah lived his life in the Word of God perfectly. That enabled two things. One, he now serves as the perfect example on how to walk out the Torah, or the Law of God. Two, because he did not sin, and never was under the Law of Sin and Death, but took on death anyway as instructed by our Father, the death we deserve is removed from us in his grace. We can live practicing righteousness in his faith and live out the Word of God in our lives, dying to our flesh daily that is against the Word of God. In the end, we are resurrected into a new body, permanently removing the flesh and desire to sin. We then walk out the freedom of the Law of God forever.

Remember, every one of Paul's letters is dealing with these seven instructions or laws in some way.

Paul uses these instructions to teach us the plan of salvation, the meaning of true faith, and the process of becoming a believer. He offers this process as means to deal with some of the misunderstandings in the first century, such as a dependency on the instructions of men, or the works-based model of salvation, or the gnostic influences and doctrines, etc.

That was only a simple overview.

Before we proceed with reviewing each of Paul's letters in detail, let's Biblically clarify each of these instructions as Paul understood them.

Let's begin with the "Law of God."

THE LAW OF GOD

The "Law of God" is simply all instructions we have received from our YHWH. In the Hebrew, this is referred to as the Torah.

The Word of God is forever and unchanging...

Isaiah 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

Now...what is the Word of God?

It is interesting how our Messiah refers to what was written by Moses as the Word of God...

Mark 7:9-10, 13

9 And he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the **commandment of God** in order to establish your tradition!

10 For Moses said...

13 Thus you nullify the **word of God** by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that."

You can see here how the commands of God, the Word of God, and what was written by Moses is all

equated to be one and the same.

Some doctrines out there try to convince us that the Word of God is not forever, that it can change, be abolished, etc.

Can that be true?

Either our Lord was correct in stating that what Moses wrote down was the Word of God, or it was not the Word of God.

Peter also said the Word of God is forever, quoting Isaiah.

1 Peter 1:23-25

since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for

“All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers,
and the flower falls,
but the word of the Lord remains forever.”

And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

This is why we need to test everything to his Word, in the end, we are accountable to what we believe, and not what others believe for us.

If the Word of God can change, then the Word of God is no longer a rock, but instead, shifting sand.

Matthew 7:24-27

“Everyone then who hears **these words** of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Unless we build our doctrine on the unchanging rock of the Word, then our theology is subject to crumbling under the changing theology of the day.

Notice how Yeshua starts off the parable...

“Everyone then who hears **these words...**”

What words?

It is worth mentioning that Yeshua discussed the parable of the wise man immediately after these words that He just spoke...

Matthew 7:21-23

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

Contrary to popular opinion, the Word of God does not change, which consequently includes the Law of God.

We spent a great deal of time in the first three installments of this series demonstrating how the Law of God has not changed, so we are not going to belabor the point here. Our purpose going forward will be dealing with the common confusion surrounding Paul and the Law of God...systematically addressing each one. First though, we have to enter into the mind of Paul, to understand Paul.

What we should want to understand is how Paul views the purpose and functionality of the Law of God...

The law of God defines sin.

Jeremiah 44:23

It is because you made offerings and because you sinned against the LORD [YHWH] and did not obey the voice of the LORD [YHWH] or walk in his law and in his statutes and in his testimonies that this disaster has happened to you, as at this day.”

Ezekiel 18:21

“But if a wicked person turns away from all his sins that he has committed and keeps all my statutes and does what is just and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

Daniel 9:11

All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.

This is also how Paul viewed a primary purpose of the Law of God...to define sin.

Romans 3:20

For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Romans 7:7

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

John taught it the same way as Paul...

1 John 3:4

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. Paul teaches that all persons are accountable to God through the Law of God.

Meaning this...there is a reason that the Law of God defines sin. After it defines our sin, it then has an impact on our current state or condition before our Creator.

He says that every mouth will be stopped, meaning that not one person can defend themselves in their sin, or having broken the law of God.

We are all guilty, and in this we become knowledgeable of our sin.

Romans 3:19-20

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Thus, before we have faith, at some point in our lives, we hear the law or instructions of God.

It is at that time we realize that we are guilty before our Creator in breaking the law of God.

It is at that time that we realize that we have not gone after the Law of God, but instead, the Law of Sin.

The Law of Sin is the opposite of the Law of God.

THE LAW OF SIN

Romans 7:23-24

... but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the **law of sin** that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

Our flesh desires sin. Our flesh hates the Law of God. As a result, we have all sinned.

Romans 3:9-12

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;
no one understands;
no one seeks for God.
All have turned aside; together they have become worthless;
no one does good,
not even one.”

The context here are those who are under the law, those being under the Law of Sin and Death.

Meaning, before faith, no one does any good, because the only thing that is defined as good is following after the Word of God.

We can do things that we think are good all day long, but if we are not doing those things in the spirit of wanting to follow after the Word of God, then we are doing these things for the wrong reasons. We are doing these things for our own reasons.

Our ways are not righteous. God's ways are righteous.

Our righteousness is like filthy rags. His righteousness is pure and right.

There are consequences to sin, and that consequence is death.

THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—

We find that in Genesis 2:

Genesis 2:16-17

And the LORD [YHWH] God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Because man ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was against the Torah of YHWH, we all deserve death.

Our sin leads to death.

Since the garden, all sin, or breaking the law of God, leads to death. This is known as the Law of Sin and Death.

We are in bondage to that reality. The Law of Sin and Death is our prison since sin was introduced in the garden.

But, there is hope.

Romans 8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus [Messiah Yeshua] from the law of sin and death.

The law of the Spirit sets us free. It might be good for us to learn what the Spirit does as it relates to the law of God.

THE LAW OF SPIRIT

What is the "Law of the Spirit?" Or asked from a Hebraic perspective, what is the "Instruction of the Spirit?"

Let's find out...

1 Corinthians 2:13

And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

Thus, they are instructions not from man, but the Spirit...offering us discernment into what is truth.

...spiritual truths to those who are spiritual...

Is the law spiritual?

Romans 7:14

For we know that the law is spiritual...

And what defines truth?

Psalms 119:142 (NKJV)

Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
And Your law is truth.

So the Spirit leads us to do the law of God, which is truth.

Likewise, this is also what our Messiah taught.

John 16:13

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

This was not something that should have been unexpected.

The prophets told us this long ago. The Spirit is to lead us to the law of God so that we may do the law of God.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

And I will give you a new heart, and a **new spirit I will put within you**. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. **And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.**

The Law of the Spirit, or the Instructions of the Spirit tells us that the Law of God is truth when we hear it.

It leads us toward the law of God, away from the flesh.

Thus, it is at this moment when the Spirit enters into us that we immediately realize that we are under the Law of Sin and Death.

It is then that we realize that we are in prison and bondage to our own sin.

Once we realize that we are in prison, then we desire a way out.
We then look to God for the way out.

The Spirit or desire for truth and desire for freedom causes us to establish the faith in YHWH and his eternal and authoritative unchanging Word.

This then, leads us to the Law of Faith, which comes from hearing.

Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

THE LAW OF FAITH

Romans 3:27-28

Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the **law of faith**. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

This instruction or law of faith is something that we are to obey...

Romans 1:5

through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations,

The Law of Faith is to conform your way of thinking to the Word of God. Paul refers to this as becoming the new man.

Ephesians 4:22-24

...to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

It is at this moment that we enter into the plan of salvation. It should be noted that this is before we technically do anything.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Our faith is not defined by works, but leads to doing works and is thus evidenced by works.

Our faith is trusting that the Word of God is truth...and the Word of God is the character that we should conform to.

So, faith leads to works, it is not that works leads to faith.

Also, consider the Hebrew word for faith, *emunah*, it is typically a word about character, the utter reliability and fidelity of someone, particularly God.

Faith is the active attitude of total reliance on God's absolute trustworthiness. That means that "faith" is demonstrated in the action of trust: of putting ourselves in his care, no matter what the circumstances!

Until and unless we act on his reliability, we don't have faith.

We might have a set of written beliefs that we can recite, but we won't have any active relationship.

Faith is only found in the action of trust, not the declaration.

Israel claimed to have "faith" in God, but their actions revealed denial of his claim on them. The truth is that they were faithless.

If faith is the action of trusting him, then we either act in trust, or we don't act in trust. We either trust him, or we go it our own way.

There is no half-full measure here.

So, how do we get this faith? God grants it, freely, abundantly, continuously.

From God's side of the relationship, nothing impedes your trust in him.

All we have to do is act accordingly.

This is why, in Scriptures, there is a marriage between our internal faith and it being evidenced in the life that we live.

Meaning this...the righteousness is what others can see and is derived from the Word of God that we believe to be truth.

Put more simply, the Law of Faith that we are to obey internally, that transforms us into a new man, and leads to the Law of Righteousness... is the observable practicing of the Word of God.

THE LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 1:17

For in it the righteousness of God is **revealed from faith for faith**, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

Paul was simply quoting the prophets...

Habakkuk 2:4

"Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him,
but the righteous shall live by his faith."

This means that true faith, which comes first, will always result in the evidence of righteous works...

A simple example would be this.

What if someone told you your house was going to explode tomorrow.
Let's make the reasonable assumption you want to live and prefer not to be blown up.

If you said you believe that your house is going to blow up, yet chose to stay in the house, would that make any sense? That would not be true faith.

If you really believed that your house was going to blow up, you would not stay in your house.

Likewise, if you really believed the Word of God to be truth, you would then have a desire to do the Word of God.

James 2:14-26

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Again, true faith produces tangible results in a person's life...that we can see...it is the evidence of faith.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Take a moment and read the rest of Hebrews 11...it is example after example of men doing things because of their faith...evidencing their faith.

Why?

Because faith produces changes in our behavior that are consistent with the Word of God...the whole Word of God.

Romans 3:27-28

Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the **law of faith**. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Remember, law simply means instruction.

Paul is teaching that if we follow the instruction of faith, that through such we are justified. On the flip

side, an instruction of works does not justify us.

So what is the instruction of faith?

The instruction is to have faith, and then we will be justified unto salvation.

This begs the question, faith in what exactly?

This is actually answered in the verse prior.

Romans 3:26

It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus [Yeshua].

Our faith is to be in Yeshua.

Again, what does that mean?

What does it mean to have faith in Yeshua?

Does that mean that we are just to believe he existed?

Does that mean that we are to just believe that he died?

No... Yeshua is the Word of God in the flesh. To believe and have faith in Yeshua is the same as believing and having faith in the Word of God.

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, can we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

So to believe in or have faith in Yeshua is to believe and have faith that the Word of God is truth, that it is the way to live.

It is in that faith that we will generate a desire to practice righteousness. It is the practicing of the Law of God that is the evidence of our faith to others.

John happens to say this very well several times:

1 John 2:29

If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

1 John 3:7

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.

1 John 3:10

By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever

does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

John communicates the same idea in the sense of our obedience is the evidence of our faith.

1 John 2:1a

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.

So John is stating that it is his desire that we do not sin, and since sin is the breaking of the Law of God, he is in effect saying that it is his desire that we follow the law of God.

1 John 2:1b - 2

But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ [Messiah Yeshua] the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

This means that when we do sin, our sin is covered by grace, through the righteousness of Yeshua.

That grace, however, is granted to those who have a desire to keep the commandments of God, to walk the same commandments our Messiah walked...the Sabbath, dietary instructions, everything.

1 John 2:3-6

And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

The idea that our fruit, or obedience, is the evidence of our faith is not something invented by Paul nor John. We already noted that the prophets taught that the righteous shall live by their faith. However, Yeshua of course, taught the same thing.

Matthew 12:33

"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit.

Yeshua produced only good fruit, as our example...and in that example he only followed the Law of God.

THE LAW OF CHRIST

1 Corinthians 9:21

To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

In the context surrounding this verse, Paul is talking about how he puts himself in the shoes of others in an attempt to help them better understand what he is teaching. In the same context, Paul then states that he is not outside the law of God, but under the law of Christ. So, he is in the Law of God and Law of Christ at the same time...meaning what?

They are the same thing.

Right here, Paul clarifies that the instructions our Messiah gave us are the same as the Law of God. Yeshua only followed the law of God, and he is to be the example that we follow, and we are to walk the same way that he walked.

Therefore, to follow the Law of Christ is the same as following the Law of God. This should make sense.

If Christ followed and taught the law of God, the Torah, then why would the law of Christ be anything but what Christ followed and taught? The Law of Christ has to be the Torah. There is no other plausible definition of the Law of Christ other than what Moses wrote as the Torah. Paul's point is that Paul not only follows the law of God, but also follows the deeper interpretations of the Torah by Messiah Yeshua.

We have now reviewed the 7 Laws of Paul.

- 1) The Law of God (Romans 3:31; 7:22-25; 8:7)**
- 2) The Law of Sin (Romans 7:23-25)**
- 3) The Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2)^[SEP]**
- 4) The Law of the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2)**
- 5) The Law of Faith (Romans 3:27)**
- 6) The Law of Righteousness (Romans 9:31)**
- 7) The Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21)**

There is a process and order of how this sequence of laws are to play out in our lives in the faith...

The Law of God is our instructions from YHWH. Our flesh desires to not follow these instructions. This is defined as the Law of Sin. Sin leads to death. We have all sinned. We all deserved death. This is known as the Law of Sin and Death. While we are under the Law of Sin and Death, we are unknowingly in bondage and trapped in the promise of eternal death. The Spirit speaks truth to us, and points us to the everlasting life of the Word of God. In this, we realize that we are in bondage in the Law of Sin and Death. We realize that we must have faith in the Word of God by trusting and fully committing to the Word of God. This is a desire to follow the Word of God, characterized by a new desire that is contrary to the flesh that is against the Word of God. In this faith, we practice righteousness. This righteousness is the same righteousness of our Messiah, that he walked out in the faith. This is known as the Law of Christ.

Now that we have reviewed these seven laws as understood by Paul, we should be ready to proceed through each letter of Paul.

As we do, quite often, we will refer back to these seven laws through the context afforded to us, and we will see that more often than not, Paul is simply helping people understand the proper order or sequence of these laws versus suggesting any of them are abolished or have changed.

So, keep these seven laws in mind as we proceed to part 5 of the Pauline Paradox Series, we will be reviewing the book of Romans in depth in the next part of this series.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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