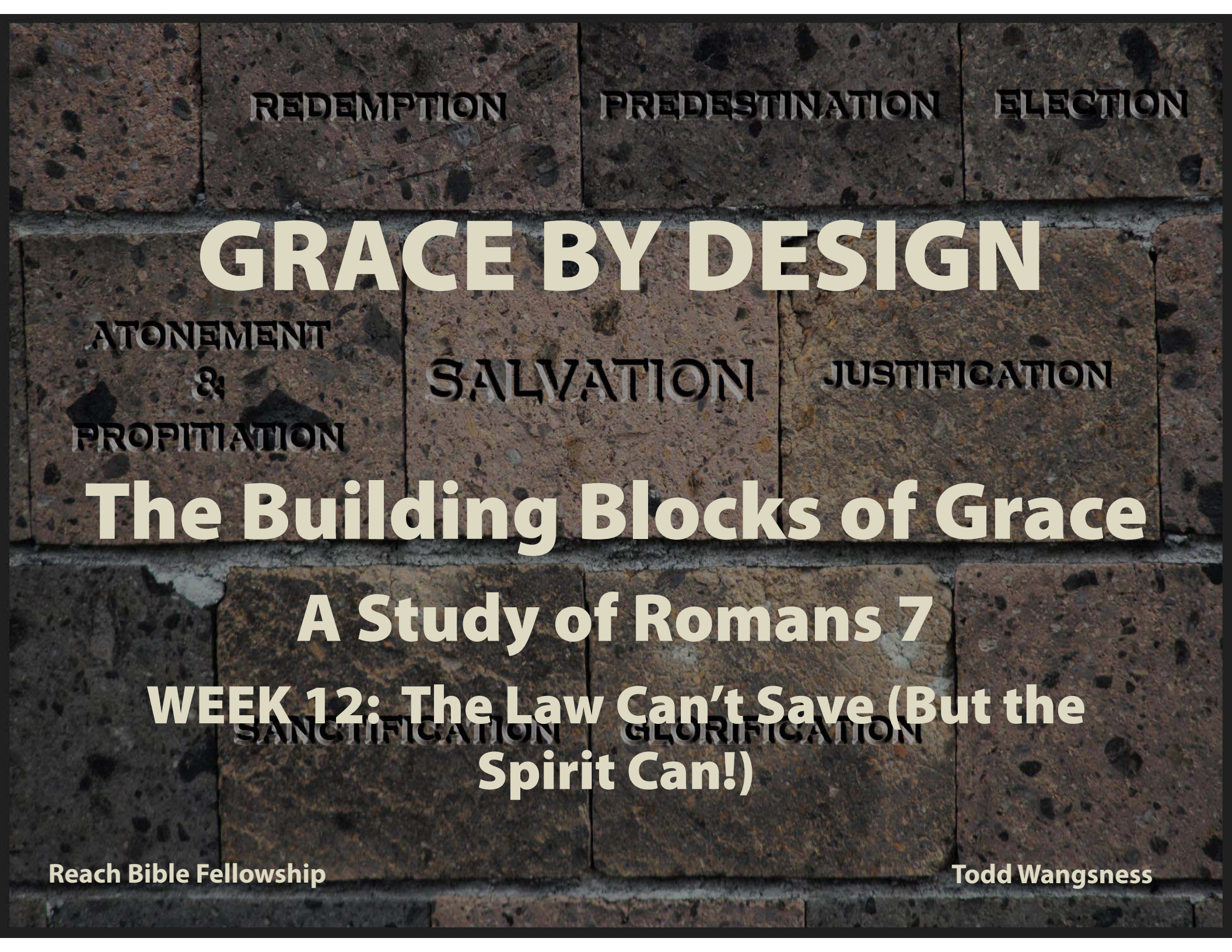


GRACE BY DESIGN

The Building Blocks of Grace

A Study of Romans 7

WEEK 12: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

Reach Bible Fellowship

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Grace By Design: Study Outline

Week 1:	Romans	Overview of Grace and Salvation
Week 2:	Rom 1:1 – 1:17	Introduction to Romans
Week 3:	Rom 1:18 – 2:16	Justification – Ignorance is not an Excuse
Week 4:	Rom 2:17 – 3:20	Justification – Knowledge isn't Good Enough
Week 5:	Rom. 3:21 – 3:24	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 1
Week 6:	Rom. 3:25 – 3:31	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 2
Week 7:	Rom. 4:1 – 4:25	Justification – Faith vs the Law
Week 8:	Rom. 5:1 – 5:11	Sanctification – Peace with God 1
Week 9:	Rom. 5:12 – 5:21	Sanctification – Peace with God 2
Week 10:	Rom. 6:1 – 6:14	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 1
Week 11:	Rom. 6:15 – 6:23	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 2
Week 12:	Rom. 7:1 – 7:25	Sanctification – The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)
Week 13:	Rom. 8:1 – 8:17	Sanctification – Life in the Spirit
Week 14:	Rom. 8:18 – 8:30	Glorification – From Suffering to Glory
Week 15:	Rom. 8:31 – 8:39	Glorification – God's Everlasting Love
Week 16:	Rom. 9:1 – 9:33	Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose
Week 17:	Rom. 10:1 – 10:13	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 1
Week 18:	Rom. 10:14 – 10:21	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 2
Week 19:	Rom. 11:1 – 11:36	The Salvation of the Jewish people
Week 20:	Rom. 12:1 – 12:2	Living the Transformed Life
Week 21:	Rom. 12:3– 12:8	Gifts of the Spirit
Week 22:	Rom. 12:9– 12:21	The Christian Walk
Week 23:	Rom. 13:1 – 13:14	Love Fulfills the Law
Week 24:	Rom. 14:1 – 14:21	Not Judging the Weak in Faith
Week 25:	Rom. 15:1 – 15:25	Bearing One Another's Burdens
Week 26:	Rom. 16:1 – 16:25	Conclusion and closing remarks

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

Notable quotes on Chapter 7:

"No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good."

- **C. S. Lewis**

"Romans 7 is not about defeat but about realism. Paul shows us that even as Christians, we face a civil war within—a war we cannot win by our own strength, but only through Christ's victory."

- **Timothy Keller**

"Paul shows here that the best of men, even when regenerated, are not free from the conflict between the flesh and the spirit ... The law reveals our misery, but it cannot deliver us from it; that deliverance comes only through Christ."

- **John Calvin**

"In this chapter, Paul speaks as one who is still in the flesh, yet longs for righteousness. This is the cry of a saint who knows his weakness and clings to grace alone."

- **Martin Luther**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

- **Theme word of Romans 7 - "Law"**
  - **It occurs 22 times in Romans 7**
- **In this chapter, Paul exposes the weakness of the Law**
- **Although Chapter 7 describes the failings of both saved and unsaved Man, it is written to the Believer**
- **Back in Rom 6:14, Paul teaches:**
  - ***"sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under Law, but under grace."***
  - **Believers are no longer under the Law, and Paul explains the doctrine of why this is so in Chapter 7**
  - **If you recall the notes regarding this verse from the earlier study, this verse is both a PROMISE and an EXPECTATION**
    - **If we are truly saved, God promises us WE WILL HAVE deliverance from sin and He EXPECTS US TO LIVE ACCORDINGLY!**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:1-2 Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that [the] law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? 2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

- **The original Greek does not contain "the".**
  - **Should be: "Law has dominion"**
- **Paul is speaking to a broader principle than just the Mosaic law**
  - **The LAW that has dominion over the 'natural' man includes the Law of Moses, but also the laws of conscience we discussed back in Romans 1-2**
- **The natural man ('in Adam') is bound ('married') to the Law**
- **According to the Law, the woman could not divorce her husband**
  - **Only the husband could divorce the wife**
  - **The woman was stuck in the marriage; good or bad (Deu 24:1-4, Mat 5:31)**
  - **God intended that Israel (and its relation to the Mosaic Law) be a picture or example for us as New Covenant believers (1 Cor 10:6)**
    - **Its purpose was to point us to Christ**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

The Law is a Control Freak!

- Paul uses the analogy of a woman married to a harsh, domineering husband who demands absolute perfection in everything she does or says and doesn't lift a finger to help
  - She is decidedly imperfect and constantly fails to meet her husband's exacting standards
  - He is demanding and unyielding
  - It is a loveless marriage … full of never-ending criticism and harsh words that constantly emphasize her failings
  - She longs for a husband that is full of love, understanding and appreciation!
  - She wants to feel loved and cherished!
  - The marriage drives her to despair!

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

- **Set free by death (Greek '*katargeo*')**
  - **Paul carries the analogy as far as he can**
    - **The wife is the Believer**
    - **The husband is alternatively referred to as the Law and as our Sin Nature**
  - **The only way for a woman to exit the 'bad' marriage was through her (or her husband's) death**
  - **Unfortunately, her husband was in perfect health!**
  - **The death of Jesus Christ crucified all things 'in Adam' as we saw in Chapter 6**
  - **He uses the Law of Moses to make the case that the Believer's identification into Jesus crucifixion releases him/her from bondage to Law**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

- **Dead to the Law … Free to marry the perfect husband, Jesus Christ!**
  - **Paul (through the Holy Spirit) states that we are dead to the Law as far as it represents a principle of living or right standing before God**
  - **However, we are not free to live unto ourselves!**
  - **We're freed so that we can be "married" to Jesus Christ and bear fruit to God!**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

- **Under the law, we did not bear fruit to God. Instead, we bore fruit to death, because the Law aroused the passions of sins within us**

- **Our life in Adam placed within each of us a 'bent' towards sin (our Sin Nature)**
  - **The instant anyone tells us what to do, our knee-jerk reaction is to want to do the opposite!**
  - **Our Sin Nature affects all areas of our life … it's pervasive!**

- **This is why all resolutions to change a behavior in our own strength are doomed to fail!**
  - **Much like telling a four-year old to stop playing with a toy!**

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7:6 But now we have <u>been delivered from the law</u>, having died to what we were held by, so that we should <u>serve in the newness of the Spirit</u> and not in the oldness of the letter.

- **Summary verse: Because we died with Jesus at Calvary, we are dead to the law and delivered from its dominion over us as a principle of justification or of sanctification**

- **We're now to serve under the <u>newness</u> of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:7-8 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." 8 But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire.

- **Paul asks the question, 'Is the Law sin?'**
  - **The problem is not with the Law … the problem is US! Our Sin Nature!**

- **The Law is simply a lens to bring our failings into clear focus**
  - *Gal 3:23-24 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor ('schoolmaster' KJV) to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

- **Once God draws a boundary for us, we are immediately enticed to cross that boundary - which is no fault of God or His boundary, but the fault of our sinful hearts**
  - *Pro 9:17 "Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant."*
  - **We want what we can't (or aren't supposed to) have!**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

- **Paul found the 10th commandment (coveting) to be his kryptonite**
  - **Of all the commands, coveting is an entirely internal sin**
  - **In our minds, we covet our neighbor's wife or husband, their home, their cars, their talents, appearance, popularity, etc.**
  - **Other sins have their root in coveting, i.e., adultery, stealing, murder**
  - **Again … we want what we can't – or aren't supposed to have**
  - **A covetous person is not a peaceful person … they are internally tormented**
    - ***Phi 4:11-12 "… for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."***

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:9-12 I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. 12 Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

- **One of Satan's greatest deceptions is to get us to think of sin as something good that an unpleasant, harsh God wants to deprive us of**
  - **"God is withholding good from me!"**

- **When God warns us away from sin, He warns us away from something that will destroy us**

- **Sin brings death by deception**
  - **Sin falsely promises satisfaction (Gen 3:5)**
  - **Sin falsely claims an adequate excuse (Gen 3:6)**
  - **Sin falsely promises an escape from punishment (Gen 3:4)**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:13 Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

- **Again … the Law is the lens that puts the spotlight on the depths of our sinfulness and depravity**
- **Our inability (and our bondage to sin) is clarified/amplified by our striving to keep the Law**
- **God intended the Law to bring us to a point of despair of attempting to keep it!**
  - **Much like the woman married to the harsh, domineering man!**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

- **Spiritual: (Greek '*pneumatikos*')**
  - **Relating to the human spirit, or rational soul, as part of the man which is akin to God and serves as his instrument or organ**
  - **Belonging to the Divine Spirit**
- **Carnal: (Greek '*sarkikos*')**
  - **Characterized by the flesh**
  - **Having the nature of flesh, i.e. under the control of the animal appetites**
  - **Human: with the included idea of depravity**
- **Sold: (Greek '*piprask*ō')**
  - **Sold under sin, entirely under the control of the love of sinning**
  - **Pertaining to being sold as a slave**

- **The Law can do nothing to help us fix this life characterized by the flesh…it can only point out our insufficiency!**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

Three types of people:

- **The Natural Man**
  - **The unregenerate man born under the sin nature inherited from Adam**

- **The Spiritual Man**
  - **The justified/sanctified man born from above and 'walking in the Spirit'**
  - **He is living the "Normal Christian Life" (ref this book title by Watchman Nee)**
  - ***Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

- **The Carnal Man (Backslider)**
  - **The justified/sanctified man that is letting sin have 'dominion' over him**
  - **We all live/act carnally from time to time, BUT our lives should exhibit evidence of a 'new creation' (2 Cor 5:17)**
  - **Genuine faith always results in good works (Jam 2)**
  - **If we live a life characterized by backsliding, we should question the validity of our salvation**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:15-20 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. 17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. 20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

- **The Law says: "Here are the rules and you had better keep them or else."**
  - **But it gives us no power to enable us to keep the Law**

- **Is Paul denying his responsibility as a sinner?**
  - **No. He recognizes that as he sins, he acts against his new nature in Jesus**
  - **A Christian must own up to his sin, yet realize that the impulse to sin does not come from who we really are in Jesus Christ**
    - *Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:21-23 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

- **Anyone who has tried to do good is aware of this struggle**
- **We never know how hard it is to stop sinning until we try!**
  - **Back to C.S. Lewis: "*No man knows how bad he is until he tries very hard to be good*."**
- **The Old Man is not the real Paul; the Old Man is dead with the sacrifice of Jesus**
  - **The flesh is not the real Paul (or the real Believer)**
  - **The flesh is destined to pass away and be resurrected into a glorified body!**
- **The New Man is the real Believer**
  - ***2 Cor 5:17 "… if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."***
  - **Now our challenge is to LIVE for the destiny to which God has called us**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

- **"*This body of death*": This is a word picture for a vivid and gruesome punishment certain depraved murderers faced in 1st Century Rome**
- **This form of punishment was known as "*poena cullei*", or "*penalty of the sack*"**
- **They would tie a decomposing corpse to the assailant inside of a sack until he was overcome by the disease and putrefaction spreading from the rotting corpse!**

7:25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

- **The glorious truth remains; there is deliverance from sin in Jesus!**
- **Jesus didn't come and die just to give us more or better rules, but to live out victory through those who believe!**
- **The message of the gospel is that there is victory over sin, hate, death, and all evil as we surrender out lives to Jesus and let Him live out deliverance from sin in and through us!**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

- **One of the keys to deliverance from sin is a steadfast, deliberate 'purpose from the heart' to submit ourselves to God!**
  - ***Heb 12:1 "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us …"***

- **The Holy Spirit grants us both the will and the power!**
  - ***Phi 2:12-13 "… work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."***

- ***"I have 'purposed' in my heart … "***
  - **Variants of this phrase occur 15 times in the Old and New Testaments**
  - **12 of the 15 times it is God Himself purposing to do something**
  - **David purposed that his mouth would not transgress (Psa 17:3)**
  - **Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself (Dan 1:8)**
  - **Paul purposed in the Spirit to visit Jerusalem and Rome (Act 19:21)**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

- **Our Christian walk requires endurance, diligence and intestinal fortitude!**
  - ***Heb 12:4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.***
    - **No one is holding a gun to your head forcing you to sin!**
    - **The desire to sin originates from our Sin Nature and is augmented by evil principalities and powers**
    - **But God has given us authority over our Sin Nature and influence of evil spirits … whether we CHOOSE to exercise that authority is up to us**
  - ***Heb 12:14-16 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord, looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.***
    - **The admonition is for us to not "sell our soul" for the passing pleasure of sin**
  - ***Heb 12:12-13 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.***
    - **Again, all these things are ACTS OF THE WILL! And God gives us both the will and power to do it as we read in Phi 2:12-13.**

Grace By Design: The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)

Questions to ponder …

- **The Law allowed only the husband to divorce the wife, but the wife could not divorce the husband.**
  - **Why did God put this restriction in place?**
- **1 Cor 10:1-10 discusses how ancient Israel was an example for us as New Covenant believers.**
  - **In what ways were they examples for us?**
- **Many describe the original sin of Lucifer as Pride**
  - ***Isa 14:13-14 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne …, I will also sit on the mount of the congregation, 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'***
  - ***Eze 28:15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.***
  - **Was his sin related to coveting?**
- **Many examples of sin in scripture originated from someone coveting something they shouldn't have**
  - **Achan and the silver bar, David and Bathsheba, Amnon and Tamar**
  - **Can you name some others?**
- **If we are caught up in a 'besetting' sin, how do we STOP sinning?**
  - **Hint:** ***Gal 5:16 Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.***