

## **110. The Misuse of God's Law**

For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. [Rom. 7:11]

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We notice throughout [Romans 7:7–12](#) that sin, not the law, is the enemy. Sin, not the law, deceived and killed me. What was the

instrument that sin used to slay me? It was the commandment of God.

Let's explain with an analogy. Is there anything evil about a sword? No. A sword is just a sword. It has no will or mind. If I pick up a sword and use it to kill someone, the sword is not put on trial and sentenced, but rather I am guilty of using the good sword in an improper manner.

Just so, Paul says that my sin deceived me and killed me by using the law. The enemy is my sin, so ultimately the enemy is myself. I have destroyed myself by misusing God's law. Instead of using the

law as a list of things to do to please God, I used it as a list of things to rebel against. The more I knew about the law, the more consistent and ferocious my rebellion became, says Paul.

Paul wants to make it clear that the law is good. Verse 12 reads, “So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.” How much more clearly could the apostle speak? It is not that grace is good and law is bad. The law is good and sin is bad. Obedience to God's law never brought about spiritual death. The problem is with me. The more of

God's law I see, the more I misuse it against myself. Thus Paul says that “in order that sin might be recognized as sin, [the law] produced death in me through what was good” (v. 13). The law, which was given to produce life and good works in me, was actually producing death in me because of the perversity of my sin and the way my sin was misusing the law.

### **Coram Deo**

Do you find it irksome to obey people in authority over you—employers, teachers, parents? Do you find that something in

your heart wants to disobey, even if only in some slight way, the things you have been instructed to do? These are some of the ways in which our sinfulness uses the commandments of others to cause us to act in self-destructive ways. Where in your life would you make a change from self-destructive patterns of rebellion to an attitude of willing obedience?

For further study: [Psalm 2](#); [Proverbs 3](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#); [James 1:12–18](#)