

Please note, I have taken excerpts from **Charles Hodge**, [A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans](#).

## Romans 7:7–13

### Analysis

Paul, having shown that we must be delivered from the law, in order to our justification (chapters 3, 4.,) and that this freedom was no less necessary in order to sanctification (chap. 6, chap. 7:1–6,) comes now to explain more fully than he had previously done, what are the use and effect of the law. This is the object of the residue of this chapter. The apostle shows, first, vs. 7–13, that the law produces conviction of sin, agreeably to his declaration in chap. 3:20; and, secondly, vs. 14–25, that it enlightens the believer's conscience, but cannot destroy the dominion of sin. This section, therefore, may be advantageously divided into two parts. Paul introduces the subject, as is usual with him, by means of an idea intimately associated with the preceding discussion. He had been insisting on the necessity of deliverance from the law. Why? Because it is evil? No; but because it cannot produce holiness. It can produce only the knowledge and the sense of sin; which are the constituents of genuine conviction. These two effects are attributed to the operation of the law, in vs. 7, 8. These ideas are amplified in vs. 9–11. The inference is drawn in ver. 12, that the law is good; and in ver. 13, that the evil which it incidentally produces is to be attributed to sin, the exceeding turpitude of which becomes thus the more apparent.<sup>1</sup>

### DOCTRINE

1. The law, although it cannot secure either the justification or sanctification of men, performs an essential part in the economy of salvation. It enlightens conscience, and secures its verdict against a multitude of evils, which we should not otherwise have recognized as sins. It arouses sin, increasing its power, and making it, both in itself and in our consciousness, exceedingly sinful. It therefore produces that state of mind which is a necessary preparation for the reception of the gospel, vs. 7, 8.

2. Conviction of sin, that is, an adequate knowledge of its nature, and a sense of its power over us, is an indispensable part of evangelical religion. Before the gospel can be embraced as a means of deliverance from sin, we must feel that we are involved in corruption and misery, ver. 9.

3. The law of God is a transcript of his own nature—holy, just, and good. The clearer our views of its extent and excellence, the deeper will be our sense of our own unworthiness, vs. 9, 12.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Hodge, [A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans](#), New Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Louis Kregel, 1882), 346.

4. Sin is exceedingly sinful. Its turpitude is manifested by the fact, that the exhibition of holiness rouses it into opposition; and that the holy law itself is made incidentally to increase its virulence and power, ver. 13.

5. Sin is very deadly. It extracts death from the means of life, and cannot exist unattended by misery, vs. 10–13.

### REMARKS

1. How miserable the condition of those whose religion is all law! vs. 7–13.

2. Though the law cannot save us, it must prepare us for salvation. It should, therefore, be carefully and faithfully preached, both in its extent and authority, vs. 7, 8.

3. It must be wrong and productive of evil, so to describe the nature of evangelical religion as to make the impression that it is a mere change in the main object of pursuit—the choice of one source of happiness in preference to another. It is a return to God, through Jesus Christ, for the purpose of being delivered from sin, and devoted to his service. Its first step is the conviction that we are sinners, and, as such, dead, i.e. helpless, corrupt, and miserable, vs. 7, 13.

4. Nothing is more inconsistent with true religion than self-complacency. Because the more holy we are, the clearer our views of God's law; and the clearer our views of the law, the deeper our sense of sin, and, consequently, the greater must be our humility, vs. 12, 13.

5. If our religious experience does not correspond with that of the people of God, as detailed in the Scriptures, we cannot be true Christians. Unless we have felt as Paul felt, we have not the religion of Paul, and cannot expect to share his reward, vs. 7–13.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Charles Hodge, [\*A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans\*](#), New Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Louis Kregel, 1882), 355–356.