

# Why Does The Law Make Things Worse

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, everyone. My name is BK. I have the pleasure of serving here as one of the pastors. If you are new or just passing through, please, we request, just as Pastor Dave mentioned, please write your name down in our folder, hand it back to the welcome table.

It's an opportunity for us to get to know you, but to pray for you. And if you're going to stick around, it's an opportunity for us to send you some information that would help you get to know us and understand us a little bit better.

Please turn with me into Romans chapter 7. Romans chapter 7. As I said last week, as we jumped into this chapter, you've joined us for one of the most interesting chapters in all of Scripture.

Last week, you heard me tell you that the book of Romans by itself includes probably the clearest proclamation, explanation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Which is the good news that we are not saved by what we do, but we are saved by what Christ has done. Amen?

[ 1 : 15 ] It's not our work, it's his work. However, Paul knows us very well. Same questions, issues that we deal with today, they dealt with 2,000 years ago.

And that's why we have these two chapters, Romans 6 and 7. If you remember, I called them guardrail chapters. Because there's two, I don't want to say it's mistakes, errors, foolishness, that man, we either waver to abuse grace, or we waver to abuse the law.

And that's why chapter 6 answers the question, does grace mean I can keep sinning? Paul says, absolutely not. You died to sin. And chapter 7 answers this question, is the law the problem?

Is the law bad? Which is the question that the Apostle Paul answers for us in this chapter. I'm going to tell you the same thing this morning as I did last week.

I'm not going to lie to you and tell you that this is a simple chapter. The fact is, many people throughout centuries have been confused in this chapter.

[ 2 : 35 ] And it's one of the reasons why we're progressing slowly through it. It's one of those chapters when you start reading and then you start asking yourself, what did I just read?

Right? You start a paragraph, you read a few lines, and then you're asking yourself, what did Paul just say? And you end up going back, rereading it, right?

Well, if I can encourage you, you're not alone in that. If you're the only one who's felt that, that is almost universal. Russell, last week, I'm glad more than you, more than a few of you commented that you gained some clarity on what was going on here.

Because the fact is, many Christians, we read our text. We believe it's important. But sometimes we don't understand it. Just what's going on here?

And there are a few reasons for that in this chapter, which we will get into. But, you know, when David talks about discipleship, one of our goals in our discipleship time, which largely predominantly happens in our growth group, is to go over the text of Scripture that we're preaching so that we can understand it.

[ 3 : 52 ] Because if you can't rightly understand it, you're never going to rightly apply it, right? You have to have right knowledge to do right action. Last week, Paul made this shocking statement.

He tells his audience, both Jewish and Christians, Gentile and Jewish Christians, he says, you have died to the law. Boom, newsflash. You're no longer under it.

You no longer belong to the law, but you belong to Christ. And we saw through that teaching that the law cannot save you. The law cannot sanctify you.

And what that word sanctification means, make you more acceptable to God, right? It's to bring peace and harmony to God. Following the law does not bring peace with God.

And staying under the law only produces fruit unto death. And what it means is you're still living in the old world. Because remember, Paul, think of him as a lawyer.

[ 4 : 54 ] He's presenting a case. And in that first part of the case, we all come through Adam. We were born into Adam, which means from the very beginning, Genesis, sin came through Adam and has cursed us all.

And the big part of that curse is death. It means death reigns over us. It's where the law shows us this. Now, when we get unified with Jesus Christ through putting our faith in him, our union with him puts us now under grace.

You with me? No longer under the law, but we're under grace. But when we sometimes don't understand the law, we sometimes sneak back over here.

We think that if I follow more laws and more rules, I'm going to please God. But what we've done is we've put ourselves back under the reign of death.

So this begs a question. That question is, if the law can't save me, is there a problem with the law of God?

[ 6 : 06 ] Could it be bad? Broken? Maybe even sinful? No. So that's why in Romans 7.7 he asks, what shall we say then is the law?

Sin. And he gives us his immediate response, by no means. Which if you've been with here for a while, it means absolutely not. It's the strongest way Paul can say, God forbid, not even close.

No way, Jose, can that be true. There's nothing wrong with the law. So the next question that we would ask then is, if the law is not the problem, what's going on?

We have this tension because on one hand, we know and understand that the law is good. The law is from God. But on the other hand, we've learned that the law exposes sin.

We learned last week that the law stirs up sin. And by all accounts, this law makes things worse.

[ 7 : 15 ] Right? So the question is, please, please, Paul, I need you to explain this to me. And this is where we're going this morning. I had originally hoped to cover up to verse 13 today, but that's not going to happen.

There's going to be a part one to this sermon and a part two. Because I want to go slow. I want us to understand there's a lot of terms that are tricky. And I want you guys to have complete understanding and confidence in what you are reading.

So, first thing I want to do is I want to define two terms for you that are important for you to understand if you're going to understand this sermon. All right?

The first term is the law. What does Paul mean when he says the law? Understand that Paul says law. He's primarily talking about God's commandments.

Especially the moral law, which are summarized in the Ten Commandments. That's the law that he's primarily talking about. This law, the Ten Commandments, and the laws that are summarized in the Ten Commandments are holy.

[ 8 : 27 ] They are good. And what makes them so amazing is that they're a reflection of God's character. By knowing God's commands, we can know God. You know that?

We can know who God is. And that's a beautiful, wonderful thing. So, the second term that I need to define for you this morning is the word sin.

Sin. Sin can mean a lot of different things in a lot of different ways. But primarily, when I say sin, you primarily think of actions, mistakes, bad decisions.

But that's not what Paul means here in this upcoming text. And I need you to understand this. In this passage, sin is power.

Okay, you with me on that? Sin is a power. It is a power that exists in you. It is a controlling influence.

[ 9 : 32 ] And it's something that acts on you, not just something you do. You with me on that? It's a power. And the sin that Paul is going to be referencing is not external to you.

It's internal to you. All right? It's not a power outside of you that exerts influence. It's actually a power inside of you that exerts its influence inside of you.

And I'm going to give you the details. That's what the sermon's for. Why this matters. So, Paul is going to walk us through this argument.

And I hope that's why I'm divided into two sermons to help us understand. But there's four primary questions that Paul answers. And today, I'm going to answer the first two. And I'm going to do that in six parts.

And basically, the question is, how does the law reveal sin? And how does sin use the law? And next week, Lord willing, we'll answer the question, how does the law expose our true condition? [10:49] And the fourth one is, given all that, how in the world is the law still good? So, those are the questions that we're going to be answering over these next two weeks.

Now, remember, there's a theme in Romans. And the greater question that this section of Scripture answers for us, it's answering the question, why can't I change?

Why can't I change? Because it's a question we've all asked, right? We knew in Romans 1 to 3, it talks about, why is this world so messed up?

Why do I do the things that I do not want to do, but I still do them? Why? Why do I act selfishly?

Why do I act in pride?

Why do I do stupid things? Why do I act in pride? Why do I act in pride? And ultimately, how can I change? And we learn that we can only change through Jesus Christ.

[11:53] But there's a struggle, an ongoing struggle, that tells us why we can't change. And this is the question that Paul answers.

If you're familiar with Martin Luther, I've used this analogy a great many times because I think it's a wonderful thing. He says, trying to understand this idea is like trying to ride a horse drunk.

You're always going to be tempted to fall on the right, the one side of grace, or over grace, or the other side of over law. And there's a balance.

And that's why Romans 6 and 7 exist. It's a guardrail to keep you firmly in the saddle. Everybody with me on that one? All right.

I got an amen. All right. Let me pray for you. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just give thanks for this wonderful text. Give you thanks for the God that you are. I just give you thanks for the wonderful gifts that you give to us.

[12:55] And one of the primary gifts is your word and your law that we learn about your character. We learn about that through our love for you demonstrates a law that demonstrates or causes us or commands us to love one another.

That this Christian faith is not just this, it's a me and God thing. No, no, no. It's me, God, and others. And those others are represented in the church today.

So, Father, I give you thanks for this text. I pray that you'd give me clarity of word as we deal in some of these terms, what they mean and what they don't mean, so that we can have clear understanding.

So, Father, I pray that you'd bring clarity to my preaching this morning. In your name we pray.

Amen. All right. So, I've given you the introduction.

Now, the first point that I want to get into is the law reveals sin. Sin. The law reveals sin. And we read this in Romans 7.7. It says, what shall we say then?

[14:04] Is the law sin? By no means. It says, yet, if it had been for the law, I would not have known sin. All right.

So, first of all, let me tell you what Paul doesn't mean. Paul is not saying that there was no sin before the law. Okay? He's not saying that people weren't sinners before the law.

Paul is not saying that the law created sin. Okay? Sin. And he's given into his testimony here. We're going to look at different aspects of this testimony.

If you were here last week, I talked about some of the challenges here. But Paul is basically saying sin has already been there. Sin has already been active. And sin has already been ruling.

Long before the law. It's always been there. So, what is he saying? Paul is saying in his own life, he goes, I didn't recognize sin for what it really was until the law showed me.

[15:10] Until the law showed me. So, that's the first point. I did not know what sin is until the law showed me. I would not have known it.

Now, this is my second point. And this is the truth. The law doesn't create sin. Sin. The law reveals sin. I'm going to use a very simple illustration.

Anybody have one of those Dyson handheld vacuums that has the laser on the bottom? Anybody stupid enough to buy one of those? I am.

Okay? And it's an incredible piece of engineering. It's got this little laser at the bottom which lights up the dirt on the floor. So, when my wife says to me, you know, have you vacuumed the floor?

I would simply look at the floor. What are you talking about? It's so clean, I could eat off it. Right?

Well, she turns on that Dyson. There's a whole other world there.

[16:12] Right? You see the dust. And listen, we've got dogs. We love dogs. And it shows every piece of dog hair that's on the ground.

See, you look at the floor and you think it's great. You turn on the laser and you see that it's bad. And suddenly you see the dust, the dirt, the dog hair everywhere.

But here's the thing. It's always been there. It's hidden. The vacuum laser didn't create the dirt. It exposed the dirt. You with me on that? That's what the law does. It exposes the dirt. The law is not the problem. The law is the spotlight on the dirt.

Okay? So, now Paul says, hey, I'm going to give you an example of this. And he gives this illustration. And it's a very interesting illustration.

[17:18] And it's also found in Romans 7, 7, the second section. And notice what it says. It says, For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said you shall not covet.

First thing you need to understand, Paul is not randomly just picking a sin here. He's very strategic in picking the sin. He could have chosen murder, adultery, theft.

But he doesn't. He chooses coveting. And the reason why he does so is because it's absolutely brilliant. The fact is, coveting is not an external sin.

Coveting is an internal sin. You can't see it. You can't measure it. You can look at someone, and they can look like a perfect moral person.

But they can still covet. They can still be guilty. Now, is anybody using one of those 17th century Bibles called the King James Version?

[18:27] Anybody use that here today if you do? All right. I don't mean to shame you, Brian, but it's okay. In that Bible, instead of covet, they use the words lust.

So if you grew up memorizing this text, you would have used the word lust. And I'll demonstrate as we begin here that that was the wrong word to use in that point.

And if you're stuck on it, I'll explain it to you why. Just come on up, and I'll explain it. Did a great deal of understanding this Greek term. But it's covet.

And covet's interesting because covet makes us uncomfortable. You see, the law gets uncomfortable because it isn't dealing with what we do.

Covet deals with what you desire. See, when you covet, it exposes your motives, your cravings, your inner life.

[19:34] Right? And do you get what is going on here? The law was never designed to regulate your behavior. The law was designed to expose your heart.

And let me explain to you why people get lost here. And this is why it's important to understand is sin is power.

Because most people define sin like this. I haven't hurt anyone. I'm a good person. I've lived a moral life. Right?

And as long as we define sin externally, you're always going to be able to justify yourself. You're always going to be able to point to someone worse than you.

Right? And you're always going to be able, I can feel good about myself. But the moment the law says, hey, let's talk about your desires.

[20:37] All of a sudden, everything changes. Because it's no matter about what you did, it's about what you wanted, what you imagined, and even what you loved.

And suddenly, the category of what it is to be a good person starts to collapse. What's interesting in this story, Paul gives us his personal testimony.

And this is what happened to Paul. Before the law came to him in this way, he thought he was fine. He thought he was righteous. He thought he was keeping the law.

In fact, he says, I was blameless before the law. If you remember Philippians 3.6, Paul considered himself blameless because he focused on the external deeds.

Murder, theft, adultery. Believing that as long as he did not commit these acts, he was righteous before God. But then the commandment hit him.

[21:48] Thou shall not covet. And he realized, I just don't break the law externally. I break the law internally.

And for him, everything changed. And if you want to know that moment of change, it simply is recorded in the book of Acts 9 on the road to Damascus.

So I'll just inform you why lust doesn't work because if you start to lose lust, then you got to start thinking, well, when did Paul become aware of lust?

And some of the arguments out there are kind of funny. They said that, you know, it only happened at his bar mitzvah or he was coming of age and now he understood or he hit puberty because then as soon as he hit puberty, he understood personal responsibility before the law.

That doesn't work. Covet works. Because as a Pharisee, he could consider himself blameless. Now, why does this matter?

[ 22 : 59 ] Let me press in on you a little bit here. Because the fact of the matter is, this is where everything begins. The fact is, there are people sitting in churches every week all over the world who think they are fine.

Why? Because they measure themselves like this. I'm not like that person. I have not done those things. I try to be good.

And here's the problem. When people talk like that, they're measuring themselves without the law. Because when the law comes in, not as rules, but as a heart level truth, you begin to see that your desires are discorded.

They don't make sense. Your motives are mixed. Your heart is not clean. And the truth is, you don't need to break the law publicly to be guilty.

You only need to desire what God forbids. So the law is doing something right now. Paul is using the law to back you into a corner.

[ 24 : 17 ] Because here's the reality, guys, and you all know this. We can't fix our past, right? Who here thinks they can control their hearts in every situation?

Who thinks that they can measure up to the standard of God? And the reality is, this is where Paul wants you. He wants you to be thinking and feeling this at this moment.

The blessed thing, he's not going to leave you there, but he's preparing you for something greater. And this is what Paul is going to explain to us in my next point.

Not only does the law reveal sin, but sin will actually use the law against you. All right? So this is my third point.

Sin exploits the law. Let's look at Romans 7, 8. But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness.

[ 25 : 22 ] All right? This is shocking. Paul has already said the law is good. The law reveals sins. But now he's saying something even more profound. Sin takes the law, and he uses it against you.

Now, the first thing to understand about sin, remember it's a power. Power is not inactive. Power is active.

So this is where we need to correct how we think. Like I said, sin isn't a mistake, a bad choice, or something we do occasionally. But Paul is describing something very different.

It's acting. It's moving. It's reacting. It's taking initiative. If you're familiar with Hebrews 12, the author of Hebrews talks about that there is an active struggle against sin.

There's like a wrestling match. That means sin isn't just some inactive inner thing on the floor. It is something that is fighting against you.

[ 26 : 33 ] All right? It's active. It's working against you. So look at this language. He said, sin seizing an opportunity. Now, this phrase opportunity is quite interesting.

It means a tendency towards something else, which means it's doing something, but it's got other plans. Okay? It might look good. It might look good at that point, but Satan's going to use it for other things.

Best described and understood in this text, it's as if sin is building a base camp inside of God's commands. And in this base camp, he's going to launch war.

All right? He's got this camp that's behind enemy lines, and he's going to use this as a base of operations, a launching point, so he can get a foothold in your life.

You with me on that? That's this power that's going on here. Now, the second thing to understand is sin schemes.

[ 27 : 37 ] It schemes. And this is critical, because if you miss this, you'll blame the wrong thing. The law says do not covet, and sin responds, now I want it more.

You see, so what's the problem? Is the law bad? No. Is the command flawed? No. The problem is sin, which is residing in this base camp inside of you, is the problem.

The law didn't create the desire. The law reveals and provokes what's already there. You with me on that? A lot of confusion.

I got a few nods. All right. Hopefully, it's going to make sense now. Point four. I'm going to give you three examples of how sin uses the law.

All right? Three ways. One, sin uses the law to produce rebellion. The command says don't, and something inside of you says, why not?

[ 28 : 46 ] Right? Why not? Because you think, you've ever talked to an unbeliever or someone on this, if I do that, I'll be happy. Right? There's this something.

There's this something in us that just doesn't want to break rules. It wants to resist authority. It's like, I don't know if you've ever been here, but if you've ever looked at a freshly painted wall, and there's a sign that says, wet paint, do not touch.

Right? Be honest. What happens next? Right? You weren't thinking about touching it, but now you've got to lean in, is it really wet? You know? Is there a problem with it?

Maybe I should check, just to make sure, because maybe I'll be a good citizen and take it off because it's no longer wet anymore. Right? But you're just drawn to it. So what happened is, the command just doesn't inform you.

It provokes something in you. And that's what Paul is saying. The law says, do not covet. And sin's response, oh really? Watch this. The second way that the law, sin uses the law, it uses the law to intensify desire.

[ 30 : 03 ] To intensify desire. Here's the thing. Before the command, you may not have even thought about it right now. Right? But now you're thinking about it.

That's why the whole world of marketing exists. It's to make you think you need something that you really don't.

I can admit, I'm quite guilty of this. I need an Apple Watch. Not because many of you guys have it, but it's got a really great app that takes my scoring of golf and measures all my hits.

Right? You know, I didn't know I needed an Apple Watch until I knew about this app. I want this watch. Right? So sin kind of does that. It intensifies the desire.

My wife doesn't know that I actually sold our other car, her car, just to afford the watch. It's just a joke. But you know, that's where the sin comes in. You start getting rid of the other stuff to have the things that may look good, but it doesn't.

[ 31 : 07 ] So the command doesn't reduce sin. It actually multiplies it. How many of you have heard, I think you'll admit, right?

I spend too much time on my phone. Anybody ever say that? Come on. Everybody said that, right? Now I want you to say, when you leave here today, I want you to say to yourself, I am not using my phone between the hours of 2 and 5.

You're not going to check it. See what happens. It's going to be on your mind. I got to check it. I got to figure out who important is texting me now. What do I need to know about the news today so I can give my opinion at work tomorrow.

Right? It's there. Now that you're thinking about it, you're reaching for it. You fill the pole. The rule didn't weaken the desire.

It made it louder. Here's the other thing. This is the third way that sin uses the law.

[ 32 : 10 ] It uses the law to introduce sin. Sometimes the law just doesn't restrain, it introduces. You hear, don't do that.

And suddenly, you're thinking about it. You're imagining that. You're drawn towards those things. And here's a perfect example which will align with absolutely every single person here.

One of the best pieces of wisdom that I can ever give you is choose your friends wisely. Because the people you invite into your life to speak into your life can usher in a whole whack of sinful thoughts.

When I grew up, I hung out with a group of Christian people, but even those guys weren't really Christian. They went to church and they exposed me to certain things.

All of a sudden, pornography is in the picture. I had never even thought about that stuff. And yet, these guys are thinking about it. You're exposed to those type of thoughts, right? Then you start wondering, well, what does that all mean?

[ 33 : 28 ] You never heard, you hear a friend the way they talk to their mother or a parent. Now, all of a sudden, you learn, oh, really, is that acceptable behavior? Are you with me on this?

Sin allows for these other influences to come into your life. And without you knowing, they provide influence. I remember so vividly in high school and university where my mind would run where I had

never had any thought about that sin until someone else introduced me to it.

You see, sin expands the imagination. The law names something and suddenly, your mind starts exploring it. So that's how Satan twists the law to drive us to sin.

And here's another warning. This is my fifth point. Sin only looks dead. Look at Romans 7, 8. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.

Now, these are one of these verses and I'm going to get into this next week. We're actually going to see Paul uses the word death and dead multiple times, which is quite confusing to us when we read it in the English.

[ 34 : 50 ] So when you understand it in the Greek, there's different subtleties. So, people get confused and they say, apart from sin lies dead.

We think it's extinct, it's inert, it's done, but it's not what he's talking about. We understand it is gone, removed, extinct. But the fact here is, he's saying that sin is never dead.

What Paul means here is, it's there, but you don't yet see it. You with me on that one? It's hidden.

You know it's there, but it's inert. It's quiet. It's hidden.

It's undetected. It's like an engine running so smoothly, you don't even know it's on, right? You assume everything's fine and when you press that gas, it comes roaring to life.

You know, I remember my friend had a 1969 Chevy Al Camino with the 396 Supersport engine.

You could hear that five miles away.

[ 35 : 56 ] Like it just rumbled just through town. But a couple of years ago, I decided, I'm out visiting a friend, I decided to rent a Camaro. It's only a V6 and I don't even think it's all that hot.

That Camaro had like 300 plus horsepower in that thing. But it started off quiet and we hit the speed, boom, gone. Hit that pedal. With that 369, Al Camino, you could hear it.

You knew it had something in it. This sin is like this Camaro. You press the gas and suddenly you hear it, you feel it, and you realize this thing had power all along.

What Paul is saying is the law just doesn't create sin. It wakes it up. And what does it do? And that brings me to the final point of this morning.

Sin breaks the illusion of life. Sin breaks the illusion of life. Look at verse 9 here. Notice it says, I once, I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

[ 37 : 15 ] What he's basically saying that when I was a Pharisee, I thought I was alive. I thought I was righteous. I thought I was with God.

I was blameless. And now, when the commandment came, thou shall not covet, sin came alive and I died.

All right, now we need to understand he's not talking about physical life. He's talking about the kind of death that Adam experienced in the garden. If you eat of the fruit in the garden, you shall die this day.

It's not, remember, he didn't die that day, but he experienced death. That's what Paul is talking about. What Paul is describing is a false sense of spiritual life.

See, before the law hit him, he felt fine. He felt righteous. He felt confident. This is what is known as the Pharisee of life.

[ 38 : 19 ] I'm doing good. I'm a moral person. I'm keeping the rules. And it reveals this truth is that you can feel spiritually alive and be completely deceived.

then the commandment comes. Thou shall not covet and everything comes alive. What Paul is saying, sin came alive, it means it was exposed.

It became active. It showed its true power. I'm going to give you guys a little bit of an illustration.

How many of you remember the 80s? All right. You're going to love this explanation. It was the day that I kind of got my first speeding ticket.

I say kind of got. All right. My buddies and I were traveling home and we're going up a hill on the way to school and while we're climbing this hill, this car races by us and the cop pulls me over.

[ 39 : 29 ] Okay. And I'm laughing and my buddies in the back seat are all laughing and they're like, Officer, I wasn't speeding. And he's going, I got you on the gun, son. I got you on the gun.

I'm like, you're making a mistake. There's no way that this is happening and this is the reason why.

Shane's going to show you a picture of the car I was driving. This is known as the Hyundai Stellar.

If you remember back in the 80s, this is when Hyundai first came into the market. They introduced a car called a Hyundai Pony. It was this little compact piece of garbage that if your parent offered you

to buy one, you'd say, no, I'll walk to school, Dad.

Thanks. Okay. So the second car is they try to make this this whole luxury brand that's coming out and I remember the car that I'm driving is actually my friend's mom's car, you know, and she thinks it's all fancy.

We were going up a hill. This car had 68 horsepower. Okay. I'm quite certain that some of the e-bikes you drive had more horsepower than this car.

[ 40 : 40 ] So in the moment, I give the cop my keys and I say, take the car. It can't even go that fast up the hill. So sure enough, he didn't take the keys but he did investigate and he found out that this car in no way, no how could have gone that fast and I got off the ticket.

You see, here's the thing. The hill didn't break the car. The hill revealed the inherent weakness in the car. Are you with me? When Paul learned that he wasn't keeping the law, more importantly, he was blameless before the law, Jesus showed him different.

And when Jesus did, his confidence collapsed, his righteous, his self-righteousness died, and his illusion shattered.

You see, the law did not kill Paul. The law killed the illusion of himself. You with me on this?

We all have that illusion. Verse 8 said, sin looks dead and I feel good.

[ 42 : 04 ] Verse 9 said, sin comes alive and I die to the illusion of me. this is our story.

There's two kind of people in this room. The first is those who feel alive. Hey, I'm fine. I'm doing okay. I don't see a problem. But the reality is sin is just quiet.

then there's those of you who've seen the truth. You've felt that conviction. You've been confronted with something and you know that your heart is full of poison.

And you realize that I am flawed or there's something wrong with me. Remember the words of Jesus in Mark 2 17.

He says, those who are well have no need of a physician. But those who are sick I came not to call the righteous but sinners.

[ 43 : 18 ] See, Jesus wasn't saying that the Pharisees who he was talking to didn't need a physician. They just didn't think they needed a physician.

He was saying he was there for those who knew they were sick. And if you know the text, the prostitutes, the liars, the thieves, the tax collectors.

Like Paul, they had their illusion destroyed. And here's the truth. And some of you know when this happens.

When it's revealed to you that you are broken by sin, that all that law keeping doesn't work when you're exposed, it's unsettling.

It's uncomfortable. That might be the reason why you're at church today. Because you've now been exposed. The illusion, the holograph is no longer there.

[ 44 : 21 ] Someone knows you exactly for who you are. But let me tell you something. This is not the problem.

This is the moment of clarity. This is the moment of clarity. Because the most dangerous place to be is when you don't feel sinful.

Because when sin is quiet, you think you're alive. But when the law comes, you finally see reality.

What's interesting for next week, Paul's going to even take it further.

Because not only does sin use the law, the law actually exposes your true condition. That's why he begins in verse 10. The very commandment that promised life proved to be death for me.

Boom! That's a statement. The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.

[ 45 : 32 ] Let me be clear. This is not where the story ends. The law exposes you, but it doesn't abandon you. God is not showing you this to destroy you.

He's showing you this to lead you somewhere. You see, if the law reveals your sin and sin hijacks the law, then the answer is not more law.

You get that? You don't get more law. The answer is a savior, not more law. law. Next, we choose to join us before we even make it.

Wow. It gets even more uncomfortable because Paul's going to show you it's not just that the sin uses the law, but that law exposes who you really are and why you can't fix it.

Let me pray. Dear Holy Heavenly Father, this is intense and I just give you thanks for the words and the time to pray and study and to bring even understanding for me and the intricacies because sometimes it's so easy to read something and just say, I trust you, God.

[ 47 : 18 ] But there's power in the exposure of this truth. there's power in understanding who we are.

It's like just because my mom and dad said I'm a really good basketball player and I show up at the NBA and get laughed out of the stadium just because my mom and dad said I was good doesn't really mean that I am.

but when I'm up against those that are far more talented the illusion is broken. I'm not as great as I thought or I was told.

The reality is the loss strips us all. And the beautiful thing is in the wonderful imagery that Colossians 3 has for us is that you clothe us in your righteousness.

So Father we thank you for this truth. In your name we pray. Amen. love