

# Bible Study Guide – Romans 7:1-25

Bellevue Church of Christ – Spring / Summer 2018

Paul is still dealing with the questions that he posed in Rom 6:1 & 15

## I. Death & Law (1-6)

Analogy	Application
Wife & Husband	Man & Law
Death	Death (Baptism)
Wife & New Husband	Man & Christ

Rom 6:6  
Gal 2:19-20, 5:24

Rom 6:21-22  
Gal 5:19-24

## II. Sin & Law (7-13)

### Why was the law given?

-To bring knowledge of sin (v.7, Rom 5:20; Gal 3:19)

-So the promise of salvation by faith in Christ might be given to those who believe (v. Gal 3:22)...HOW?

<sup>1</sup>Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the *law*—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?

<sup>2</sup>For a married woman is bound by *law* to her husband while he lives, but if her husband **dies** she is released from the *law* of marriage.

<sup>3</sup>Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband **dies**, she is free from that *law*, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

<sup>4</sup>**Likewise**, my brothers, you also have **died to the law through the body of Christ**, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear *fruit for God*.

<sup>5</sup>For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear *fruit for death*.

<sup>6</sup>But now we are *released from the law*, having **died** to that which held us captive, so that we *serve in the new way of the Spirit* and not in the old way of the written code.

<sup>7</sup>**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.**"

<sup>8</sup>But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, *sin lies dead*.

<sup>9</sup>I was *once alive* apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

<sup>10</sup>The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.

<sup>11</sup>For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it **killed me**.

<sup>12</sup>So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

<sup>13</sup>Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, **in order that sin might be shown to be sin**, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

Why is it necessary for man to die to the law? **BECAUSE...**

We are under a curse Deut 27:26, Gal 3:10

No one can be justified by law Rom 3:20, Gal 3:11

To "belong to another" (v.4) and "serve in the new way of the Spirit" (v.6)

Does "released from the law" imply that we are no longer expected to keep God's commandments? Why or why not?  
-Rom 6:1-4, 15  
-Gal 5:13-26

Exo 20:17 - Why did Paul pick this commandment?

Phil 3:5-8

Rom 5:12

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*Building upon his argument made in vv. 7-13  
– The Law is from God (vv.22,25)*

### III. Mind & Flesh (14-25)

*The Opposite  
of Spiritual*

*A dramatic  
explanation  
of why it is  
**impossible**  
for man to  
be saved by  
the Law.*

<sup>14</sup>For we know that the law is *spiritual*, **but** I am of the *flesh, sold under sin. Slavery to Sin (Rom 5:15-23)*

<sup>15</sup>For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, **but** I do the very thing I hate.

<sup>16</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good.

<sup>17</sup>So now it is no longer I who do it, **but** sin that dwells within me.

<sup>18</sup>For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, **but** not the ability to carry it out.

<sup>19</sup>For I do not do the good I want, **but** the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

<sup>20</sup>Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, **but** sin that dwells within me.

<sup>21</sup>So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

<sup>22</sup>For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,

<sup>23</sup>**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.

<sup>24</sup>Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? (*Rom 8:1-2*)

<sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, **but** with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

*The Law*

*My Mind*

VS.

*My Flesh*

**SIN**

<b>v. 14</b> For we know that the Law is spiritual,	<b>but</b>	I am of the flesh, sold under sin.
<b>v. 15</b> For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want,	<b>but</b>	I am doing the very thing I hate.
<b>v. 16</b> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good.		
<b>v. 17</b> So now it is no longer I who do it,	<b>but</b>	sin that dwells within me.
<b>v. 18</b> <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right,	<b>but</b>	not the ability to carry it out.
<b>v. 19</b> For I do not do the good I want,	<b>but</b>	the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.
<b>v. 20</b> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it,	<b>but</b>	sin that dwells within me.
<b>v. 21</b> So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.		
<b>v. 22</b> For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,	<b>but</b>	<b>v. 23</b> 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.
<b>v. 24</b> Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?		
<b>v. 25</b> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind,	<b>but</b>	with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

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**Romans Chapter 7 - Questions for Discussion**

***Memory Verse:***

***Romans 7:18 (ESV)***

*<sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.*

Is Paul trying to make a specific point about marriage? If yes, what is his point? If no, why does he introduce marriage into this discussion? (vv. 1-3)

What is involved in “dying to the law” or being “released from the law?” What is the benefit to us? What would be the ending result if we did not “die to the law?” What does it mean that our sinful passions are “aroused by the law?” (vv. 4-6; Gal 2:19-20; Rom 3:20)

Does “released from the law” imply that we are no longer expected to keep God’s commandments? Why or why not? (vv. 4-6; II Cor 5:14-15; Gal 5:16-24; Titus 3:8)

What does God’s law do for us (what benefit does Paul point out)? In what sense is sin dead without the law? In what sense was Paul alive apart from the law? What is the significance of Paul stating that he “died” (v. 9) or that he was “killed” when the commandments came (v. 11)? (vv. 7-11; Matt 19:16-20; Phil 3:6)

What brings death under the law? SIN Or LAW (vv. 9, 13)

What two laws are at war within the life of man? How does Paul describe this struggle in his life? How does he describe his mind? His flesh? (vv. 14-25)

How can one escape the consequences of our imperfect nature?

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**Notes**

*As already observed, sin and death in their correlation have occupied Paul to a great degree from 5:12 on, with an occasional reference to a third element, the law. In chapter 6 he has sought to explain that the believer's crucifixion with Christ has brought freedom from enslavement to sin's dominion. Since the law has served to promote sin (5:20), it is expedient now to show that Christ's death, which involved the death of those who are his, effected release from the law also. At the same time Paul is careful to indicate that this emancipation from the law is in order to permit a new attachment, namely, to the risen Lord and his Spirit, so that from this union might flow a fruitfulness of life unattainable under the law. Since union with Christ has already been shown to be so powerful a factor in its intended result as to warrant the figure of slavery (to righteousness), the way has been made clear to teach deliverance from the law as not opening the door to irresponsible and sinful conduct.<sup>1</sup>*

**Paul's Anticipated Question(s)**

Romans 6:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

Romans 6:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

**We are Under a Curse**

Deuteronomy 27:26 (ESV)

<sup>26</sup> “ ‘Cursed be anyone who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.’ And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’

Galatians 3:10 (ESV)

<sup>10</sup> For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

**Can't be Justified by Law**

Romans 3:19–20 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> 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.

<sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Galatians 3:11 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.”

**Crucified with Christ**

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<sup>1</sup> Harrison, E. F. (1976). Romans. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 10: Romans Through Galatians* (F. E. Gaebelin, Ed.) (75). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

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Romans 6:6 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

Galatians 2:19–20 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 5:24 (ESV)

<sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Bearing Fruit**

Romans 6:21–22 (ESV)

<sup>21</sup> But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

Galatians 5:19–24 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Released From the Law / Released From Commandments?**

Romans 6:1–4 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:15 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

Galatians 5:13–26 (ESV)

<sup>13</sup> For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. <sup>14</sup> For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." <sup>15</sup> But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. <sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the

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things you want to do. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

**You Shall Not Covet**

Exodus 20:17 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup> “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

**Why Was the Law Given?**

Romans 5:20 (ESV)

<sup>20</sup> Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

Galatians 3:19 (ESV)

<sup>19</sup> Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made, and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.

Galatians 3:22 (ESV)

<sup>22</sup> But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

**Paul’s Life Before Christ**

Philippians 3:5–8 (ESV)

<sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. <sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

**Sin Brings Death (“Killed Me”)**

Romans 5:12 (ESV)

<sup>12</sup> 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—

**Who Will Deliver Me?**

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Romans 8:1–2 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

**Scriptures Used in Questions**

**Galatians 2:19-20 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

**Romans 3:19-20 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

**2 Corinthians 5:13-15 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. <sup>14</sup> For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; <sup>15</sup> and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

**Galatians 5:16-24 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Titus 3:7-8 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

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**Matthew 19:16-20 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> And behold, a man came up to him, saying, “Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?” <sup>17</sup> And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” <sup>18</sup> He said to him, “Which ones?” And Jesus said, “You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, <sup>19</sup> Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>20</sup> The young man said to him, “All these I have kept. What do I still lack?”

**Philippians 3:3-6 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— <sup>4</sup> though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.



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**The Rest of the Story**

**Illustration:** When I look for ways to present a section of scripture, I always start looking for ways to break down the text into a way that can be more easily communicated and absorbed. I look for the main ideas, key words, points, etc.

Not doing this would be like trying to carry everything we need for a trip without luggage. The main ideas, key words, points become the “handles” that allow us to carry the full contents of what is presented in scripture.

When I look Romans 7:14-25, I see two things:

- (1) The main idea is: Mind vs. Flesh
- (2) The key word is: “**But**” >> Unusual key word!

“**But**” - 1254 δέ (*de*): pt. and cj.; ≡ Str 1161—**1.** LN 89.94 **and**, a marker of an addition, sometimes implying a contrast (Tit 1:1); **2.** LN 89.87 **and then**, a marker of closely related events (Mt 1:2); **3.** LN 89.124 **but**, a marker of contrast (Mt 22:14; Jn 7:10); **4.** LN 91.4 νυνὶ δέ (*nyni de*), and so, but now; a marker of a summary statement (1Co 13:13)<sup>2</sup>

(I) But I

**Illustration: The Rest of the Story** was a Monday-through-Friday [radio](#) program originally hosted by [Paul Harvey](#). Beginning as a part of his newscasts during the [Second World War](#) and then premiering as its own series on the [ABC Radio Networks](#) on May 10, 1976, *The Rest of the Story* consisted of stories presented as little-known or forgotten facts on a variety of subjects with some key element of the story (usually the name of some well-known person) held back until the end. The broadcasts always concluded with a variation on the tag line “And now you know the rest of the story.”

From its inception, the scripts for the series had been drafted and the broadcasts produced by Harvey's son [Paul Harvey, Jr.](#), who in later years of his father's career also acted as a substitute host. Some of the radio stories were published in book form as *The Rest of the Story and More of The Rest of the Story*. (On the back cover of *More of the Rest of the Story*, the book is said to contain “True mysteries from history”.) After the elder Harvey's death on February 28, 2009, ABC radio host [Doug Limerick](#) was chosen as the show's new host.<sup>1</sup>

*The Rest of the Story* was canceled after three weeks with Limerick as host.<sup>3</sup>

You know what the news is, but in a minute you are going to know “*The Rest of the Story*”

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<sup>2</sup> Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)*. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> *The Rest of the Story*. In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved July 19, 2013, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Rest\\_of\\_the\\_Story](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Rest_of_the_Story)

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**Example: Andrew Jackson**

*(1781) Elizabeth Hutchinson who bravely marched into a British prison camp alone and petitioned the guard and commander over and over for the release of her two sons. She successfully won their release, but not in time for her oldest to be saved from infection and disease. However the youngest one lived (he was 14 years old). Harvey conveniently left out the name of the youngest, and at the end revealed that Elizabeth was actually Elizabeth Hutchinson Jackson, and that her youngest son would go on to be the 7<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, Andrew Jackson. And now you know “The Rest of the Story.”*

**Keyword – “But” > Paul’s “Rest of the Story”**

This word appears 8 times in vv. 14-25, and highlights the contrast between what Paul’s mind wants him to do, and what his flesh compels him to do:

<b>v. 14</b> For we know that the law is spiritual,	<b>but</b>	I am of the flesh, sold under sin.
<b>v. 15</b> For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want,	<b>but</b>	I am doing the very thing I hate.
<b>v. 16</b> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good.		
<b>v. 17</b> So now it is no longer I who do it,	<b>but</b>	sin that dwells within me.
<b>v. 18</b> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. <b><i>For I have the desire to do what is right,</i></b>	<b>but</b>	not the ability to carry it out.
<b>v. 19</b> For I do not do the good I want,	<b>but</b>	the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.
<b>v. 20</b> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it,	<b>but</b>	sin that dwells within me.
<b>v. 21</b> So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.		
<b>v. 22</b> <b><i>For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,</i></b>	<b>but</b>	<b>v. 23</b> 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.
<b>v. 24</b> Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?		
<b>v. 25</b> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! <b><i>So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind,</i></b>	<b>but</b>	with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

**James 2:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

**Romans 1:32 (ESV)**

<sup>32</sup> Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

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What is **Our** story?

- **“I’m trying to be a good person.”**

*But....I’ll never be good enough to escape sin and earn salvation*

**Romans 3:23 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

**1 John 1:5–6 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

**1 John 1:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

- **“If I just had [Money, Family, Pleasure, Job], then I would be [Happy, Content, Successful].”**

*But....I’ll find that this search brings only frustration, and is meaningless.*

**Ecclesiastes 2:1–11 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.” But behold, this also was vanity. <sup>2</sup> I said of laughter, “It is mad,” and of pleasure, “What use is it?” <sup>3</sup> I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life. <sup>4</sup> I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. <sup>5</sup> I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. <sup>6</sup> I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. <sup>7</sup> I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the sons of man.

<sup>9</sup> So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. <sup>10</sup> And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. <sup>11</sup> ***Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.***

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- **“My life is a mess. I’ll commit to God once I get my life straightened out.”**

*But...this day will never come. We CANNOT straighten out our life without God. We will continue to be dead in our sins, and we are not guaranteed tomorrow.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:1–4 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. <sup>3</sup> While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. <sup>4</sup> But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.

**2 Peter 3:8–10 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. <sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

**1 Corinthians 15:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

*Paul felt guilt as a past persecutor, but this did not prevent him from coming to Christ*

**Matthew 11:28–30 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

No matter what **Our** story is, **The Rest of the Story** is always Sin, Death, Separation from God! It means NOTHING!

Without God, **The Rest of the Story** is the **END OF THE STORY!** Sentenced to death because of our sin, separated from God.

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(II) But God

***BUT...it doesn't have to be the END OF THE STORY! God has offered us rescue from certain death!***

**Ephesians 2:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

**Ephesians 2:4–5 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

**Ephesians 2:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

**Ephesians 2:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> **But now** in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

**Romans 3:19–26 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

<sup>21</sup> **But now** the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. <sup>26</sup> 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.

**1 John 1:5–9 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. <sup>7</sup> **But** if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. <sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **<But...>** <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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**Romans 8:1–4 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> There is **therefore** **<But>** now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup> For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

**Illustration:** *On August 30, 2005 Coast Guard Lieutenant Iain McConnell was ordered to fly his H46 helicopter to New Orleans and to keep that machine flying around the clock for what would turn out to be a heroic rescue effort. None of his crew were prepared for what they were about to see. They were ahead of every news crew in the nation. The entire city of New Orleans was under water. On their first three missions that day they saved 89 people, three dogs and two cats.*

*On the fourth mission, despite twelve different flights to New Orleans, he and his crew were able to save no one. None! They all refused to board the helicopter. Instead they told the Coast Guard to bring them food and water. Yet they were warned that this extremely dangerous. The waters were not going to go away soon. Sadly, many of those people perished because of their refusal to be rescued.*