**Dead to the Law!**

A picture containing text

Description automatically generatedRomans 7:1-25

(Lesson #11)

***7:1 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? 2 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. 3 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. 4 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. 5 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. 6 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.***

**Vs 1 -** Paul has been hammering home **the law. Most agree that this is a broad reference to** the law as given on Mt Sinai, and in general as contained within the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) what we might loosely refer to as the **Mosaic Law**.

Now before we advance, let’s collect what Paul has said about the law. First, the Greek word is **νόμος** (nomos). Like our English word it can be used in many different ways. Paul uses the word over 70 times in the book of Romans, so let’s capture some of the things he has said about the Mosaic law.

**The Mosaic Law -**

1. The law is God’s law (7:22)
2. The law is good (7:16)
3. The law outline God’s righteous demands (2:12)
4. The law displays God’s holy character (7:12)
5. The law is spiritual (7:14)
6. The law has no remedy for sin (within itself for those who break it) (3:20)
7. When the law came into the world sin increased (5:20)
8. The law was given to show us that we could not keep it! (7:18-19)
9. We know from Galatians, that the chief end of the law was to shepherd us to Christ:

*“24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,” (Ga 3:24-25 ESV)*

**The ministry of the law compared to the ministry of the Spirit**

*“7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses’ face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? 9 For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. 10 Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it.” (2Co 3:7-10 ESV)*

As you think about the law, Chuck Missler said something that might be helpful: *“You do not go to the judge who sentenced you to die and ask him how you should live.”* Keep this in mind as we go.

He now leads with a rhetorical question, namely: ***Do you not know, that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?***

So, acknowledging that they (along with us) understand the law, he leads them to a common-sense point, namely: A dead person is no longer under the law’s power.

Reminder:

*“1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 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.” (Ro 6:1-4 ESV)*

*“6 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. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.” (Ro 6:6-8 ESV)*

He is now going to take that point (our death) and make the next major point of application. You see the rhetorical question: ***Do you not know, that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?***

A dead person cannot break or obey the law, the power of the law is in every sense is broken**.** Stated differently, Paul makes clear another point, the law is in force, as long as a person lives.

I hope you see the point he is creating. We are no longer under the law, because metaphorically, we have died. Here is how he expressed it to the church in Galatia:

*“19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 20 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.” (Ga 2:19-20 ESV)*

To develop this point, Paul provides an analogy that we can easily lay hold of.

**Vs 2 -** Now Paul is not teaching on marriage, he is rather using marriage and the associated laws of marriage as an analogy, an example of the believer’s relationship to the law.

A woman who is married is bound by the law to her husband while he is living. If her husband should die, she is **released from the law of marriage.**

**Vs 3 -** **Accordingly, or therefore!** If while married and her husband is alive, she goes and shacks up with another man, she shall be called an adulteress. Paul reiterates the point he made in verse 2. The law of marriage is binding.

**But if her husband dies…** She is free from the law of marriage, she is released from her marital obligations.

If as a window, her husband died, the law of marriage is terminated, and she marries another man, she is not an adulteress.

**Vs 4 –** **Likewise, so that, therefore, or wherefore...** Now it is time for Paul to make his point. He set up the example, it is now application time.

**You and I, as believers have died to the law through the death of Christ.** We have died, so that we can “belong” to another.

**This is when we were translated out of the kingdom of Darkness, into the Kingdom of Christ and we now belong to Christ (the one who has been raised from the dead)!**

**Interesting about Paul’s analogy.** Because of our union we are like both the husband and the wife in this example.

**We died to the law (pictured in the husband) we are now free to marry another (pictured in the wife).**

We are free to belong to him, and here we see God’s purpose: ***in order that we may bear fruit for God.***

**Only a person who is spiritually alive (born again) can bear spiritual fruit!**

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” (Joh 15:5 ESV)

“22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” (Ga 5:22-23 ESV)

We have died and are now beyond the reach of the law. **But, we are alive in Christ, the debt being fully discharged, in order that we might live (bear fruit) to and for God.**

**APPLICATION:** Having died to the law, and being now alive in Christ, we are free to live in the way that God intended, as Christ’s beautiful bride, without spot and without blemish (Eph 5:26-27)!

**Vs 5 -** While we were lost, Paul describes when we were **living in our flesh** (imperfect tense and represents a continual or repeated action in the past)

I do not know about you, but that is a **fantastic description of who I was**. **Living in the flesh**, with our **sinful passions**, being **aroused by the law**, which were working in our members to bring forth death!

We talked about this previously, and I provided four ways the fallen nature (flesh) is aroused by the law:

1. **The idea of forbidden fruit**. Once you tell a depraved person not to do something, they will want to do it all the more.
2. **The idea that a person can keep the law perfectly in their own power.**  The law can result in people trying to find security in keeping it, even though they are not really obeying it, thus causing sin to increase.
3. **The law allows us to see sin better.** The law comes and now we clearly see God’s stance on the matter. It causes us to see how bad our condition is and thus we see more sins.
4. **When the law comes sin changes to transgression.** When the law comes, sin now becomes transgressions (like Adam) and the whole matter becomes much worse, for now when men disobey, they are actually transgressing against God’s law.

These are descriptions of how **sin is aroused by the law.** This waspictured in the garden.

The serpent used God’s good and holy law to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to deceive Eve. He deceived her implying God’s motives were impure, and he deceived her into questioning the penalty that God had warned.

**Vs 6 -** **BUT NOW!!!! Having “died to the law” a point Paul has been driving home**, we are **now “released”** from the law…

This Greek word means to **sever**, to **separate**, to **put and end to**, to **be discharged from**.

*But now, that the shackles of the law have been broken, since we died to the thing that had previously held us in bondage (namely the law). We like the wife whose husband died, are now free. Free to serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. (RT)*

All this has happened, so that we can now be free to **“serve”** in a new way of the Spirit and not simply following a written code. The word translated “serve” is the Greek word **δουλεύω** (douleuo) and means to **serve as a slave**.

**Before being saved, we saw the law as rules that were preventing us from doing all that we wanted to do.** A dead code making demands and rousing sin in our lives, making our entire situation even worse.

Now that God’s Spirit lives within us. We are not following **so much a written code** as **a risen Savior**.

The Spirit is the one who provides the resources for you and I to bear fruit unto God, and that results in our growing in faith and in our sanctification.

The ministry of the Spirit, is the promised development in salvation history described in the Old Testament and realized in Jesus Christ:

*“31 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."”* (Jer 31:31-34 ESV) (See also Heb 8:6-12)

Being and operating (were living) in the flesh (imperfect tense, repetitive actions in the past) is the **old way** of life.

Being and operating (serving) in the new way of the Spirit (present tense and points to continual action) is the **new way** of life.

**Rhetorical question:** When you gave your life to Christ, God released you from the law. What was the purpose of that release?

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***7 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." 8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. 10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.***

**Vs 7 -** Now having said all that, **well then is the law sin?** Another of Paul’s many rhetorical questions.

**He has said so much one might wrongly conclude that point. The answer, typical Pauline: *By no means!*** Paul simply dismisses such a charge as completely false.

**The law taught me what was sin.** The thing that **shows you what is sin, cannot itself be sin.**

Then Paul’s example. There are things that I did not even realize were forbidden by God, as an example, **coveting.** So the law is definitely NOT sinful in any way!

**Rather, in a sense it like a mirror or a thermometer.** If the room is too cold, you do not blame the thermometer!

**Vs 8 -** **The law is not sinful, but sin...**

In my sinful fallen nature, prior to my conversion, the commandment not to covet, the prohibition, came to me. Then all of a sudden, I learned I had already broken the command (bad) and it also created in me this **counter desire**, within my **fallen flesh** (fallen nature) to continue to do the very thing that the law had condemned (very bad)!

**When Paul says, “apart from the law, sin lies dead.”** He is referring to the counter-desire that occurs in fallen man. He is referring to how the law makes sin “increase” in the fallen man and woman.

**We know we have missed the mark, and that is bad. The law comes and the situation gets more dire.** While in other cases we did not realize we were missing the mark, the law comes, and bang... It slays us.

Again, it seems he is reiterating that when the law came sin was “invoiced” and now when we disobey we transgress, just like Adam in the garden!

**Vs 9 -** He means, **free from guilt of doing wrong,** in some cases, like coveting, I did not even **know I was sinning**, and I surely did not **know I was transgressing**.

**Life was good, or at least I thought.** The command came, I am now **aware that what I was doing is rebellion** against a holy God, and thus I am slain.

We are clear that men are under the judgement of God, because of their sin. We understand that is not contingent on them having the written law. For the heavens declare the glory of God, man is crated in God’s image with a conscience, and God has given man moral reasoning.

**Paul is talking about when the written law came and he realized he was guilty before a holy God!**

**Vs 10 -** The commandments, all **together holy**, **righteous**, and **good**. Given by a **holy God**, but they can only **condemn.** **They provide no remedy to my problem.**

**They only provide judgment, the just condemnation of death…**

**Vs 11 -** I hope you see Paul’s linkage to the garden.

Just as the serpent deceived Eve, by using God’s command and distorting God’s character and intentions toward his creation, **so sin (being personified again)** uses God’s command to highlight and even “increase” human rebellion and thus its consequences. DEATH!

**Sin, this sinister and devious, king, seizes the opportunity of the commandments, now broken and pronounces death to me. It kills me, Paul says!** The law pronounces the sentence of death and that without remedy!

**APPLIACTION:** **Legalism** produces one of two things:

1. **Pride**
   1. Pharisees
2. **Self-loathing**
   1. People who abandon even attempting to follow Jesus because they simply cannot be good enough.

**Vs 12 -** In great love, God uses the law to show us that we cannot do it. If we are honest, we cannot keep it. It proves to be, if we will listen, a GREAT schoolmaster.The law is not the problem. The law is both holy and righteous!

The law is not what brings death… Sin brings death, and Paul is about to drive this point home.

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***13 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. 14 ¶ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. 15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 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. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.***

**Vs 13 -** Paul’s style, another rhetorical question: ***So did the law bring death to me?***

**No, absolutely not!** **It was sin**, which **produced death in Paul and in us**, and it used what was good (the law).

Now all this should show us **how sinful sin really is**. **That we might see that sin is sinful and hideous beyond measure.** The law is not the problem. Sin is the problem.

Vs **14 -** W**e** know (here Paul is including his audience in what he is about to say) namely, that the law is **spiritual.**

He just called the law **holy, righteous, and good** (7:12).

**Frank Thielman:** *The law is God’s good gift and appeals to the aspect of the inner person that is sensitive to God.*

**The contrast of something spiritual is something fleshly.** Something or someone operating in the flesh, following the sinful desires of the flesh as opposed to the Spirit.

*“But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.” (1Co 3:1 ESV)*

Never forget, Paul is writing to believers.

Here is what Paul says... **I am carnal** (present tense, indicative mood). **Notice Paul says, but I am sold under sin!**

This language is not new to us:

*“What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,” (Ro 3:9 ESV)*

*“But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.” (Ga 3:22 ESV)*

Again, scholars disagree if Paul is referring to himself prior to regeneration or after. Weather he is referring to the experience of lost people or of saved people, so although I am taking a position, I get the tension.

If he is talking about a lost person, we all agree. **If a saved, then we are beginning to get hints of the very aggressive inner struggle that goes on within every believer (one who has been justified by faith) and is seeking to walk with God (practical sanctification).**

**The verb “I am” is present tense. While the verb “sold” is perfect tense** (action completed in the past, that never needs to be repeated).

I suspect he wants us to embrace the warfare that goes on now that we are spiritually alive, yet never forget we are awaiting the day when we will receive a resurrected body.

**Vs 15 -**  ***For I do not understand*** (present tense) ***my own actions. For I do not do*** (present tense) ***what I want, but I do*** (present tense) ***the very thing I hate.***

**APPLICATION:** The truth is, regardless of what you believe about these verses we have all experienced this!

That is what Paul is introducing, that although **justified by faith**, although we possess a right standing before God, the **work of sanctification** is an **ongoing process**.

If the apostle Paul could say: ***For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.*** We need to recognize that we must walk close with God, for this very thing can happen to us.

**The internal warfare is real!**

**Sin is so insidious, it is always seeking to trip us up, and it can lead us in a wrong direction. Even something good like pursuing God, but doing so in the wrong way!**

**Is that true, can a person pursue God, but in a sinful, unspiritual way?**

*“30 ¶ What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; 31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."” (Ro 9:30-33 ESV)*

**Do you see how sinister sin is? So what is the answer, what is our hope? He is getting ready to tell us, so hang on!**

**Vs 16 -** ***Now if I do*** (present tense) ***what I do not want, I agree*** (present tense) ***with the law, that it is good.***

When we sin, we are not showing that the law is the problem. **We are showing that law is good.** The problem clearly lies elsewhere, and Paul is continuing to ensure that we understand that **sin is the problem**!

**Stated differently, the very conflict within the born-again Christian, the conflict between knowing the law and failing to do the law, then, reveals that the law itself is good, indeed very good.** The Greek word translated good is **καλός** (kalos). It means **beautiful**, **handsome**, **excellent**, or **noble**.

That is indeed the correct description of the law!

We all experience this as well! This is not part of the old man, who hated the law, whose sinful passions were aroused by the law. This is the experience of the new man, who when he sins, recognizes the problem is not in God’s good law. The problem is in ME!

**Vs 17 -** Now **Paul highlights this dichotomy**, this **separation within himself**.

**It is sin**, that is still dwelling within me, it is my flesh, it is the unredeemed part of me.

**NOW, this is not an excuse to sin, he is not trying to avoid personal responsibility.** He is not saying go on and sin, it is no big deal (Rom 6:1-4).

Paul has already built the case that the **power of sin, in the life of a believer has been broken.**

**We are now free to follow God, but we have an old nature (for now) and we should not underestimate the power of that old nature.**

**Vs 18 –** **YIKES!** So Paul makes a statement that seems too far, and then qualifies it for us.

***For I know that nothing good dwells*** (present tense) ***in me…***

**Does apostle Paul really mean that nothing good (at all) dwells within him?** Notice he adds the qualifier.

Here again, Paul is showing us these two worlds, these two kingdoms:

**Flesh (old) Sprit (new)**

**Grace,** I thought about your question. Here it is, **in our flesh**, the old unredeemed part of us that is waiting for that blessed hope, the redemption of our bodies. **In our flesh, NOTHING GOOD DWELLS!**

When we placed faith in Jesus Christ we were born again, if we go back to our forensic term we were **JUSTIFIED**. **Spiritually, we were made alive in Christ Jesus, we were given a new heart and a new nature, and the Holy Spirit of God came and lived within us.**

But we are waiting for a new body.

Do you remember what John said:

*“Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.” (1Jo 3:2 ESV)*

**Beloved, we will one day receive a new and glorious body!**

Then Paul says: ***I desire to do what is right, but often lack the power.***

This appears to be the voice of a man, who laments that he is not perfectly walking with God. He has this desire, the inner man, the new man desires, to always do what is right!

**APPLICATION:** We are going to drop this flesh off in the grave and one day be clothed in a new, spiritual body, one like Jesus’s body, one that can inherit heaven.

This is the strain of the two natures. Spiritually we are alive, but we are waiting for the day we when receive a glorified body.

*“****40*** *There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another.* ***41*** *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.* ***42*** *So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable.* ***43*** *It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.* ***44*** *It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.* ***45*** *Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.” (1Co 15:40-45 ESV)*

**But for now, we are in a fight, a real battle against our old nature.** This was not possible while we were slaves to sin, for we were willing slaves.

**Vs 19 -** **All present tense verbs!**

Now Paul is not saying he never does good. But rather, he is saying there are times, when in spite of knowing what is good, and even wanting to do what is good, he instead does what is evil, the very thing he did not want to do, that is what he finds himself doing at times.

The closer we walk with God, the more we rely on the indwelling Spirit, the less the reality of verse 19, is a reality in our day to day lives (Gal 5:16).

**Vs 20 -** Here, Paul points back to the issue. In some real sense, sin, still dwells “within me” that is in the flesh. Here Paul clearly shows us the source of sin in our lives is the old nature.

Now Paul ended chapter 6 with many thinking he was teaching sinless perfection in this life (which he was not). As we get here, Paul has many thinking, well there is nothing we can do but sin (which is not true either)! We must hold these two truths in balance.

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***21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 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. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself***

***+3***

***f serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.***

**Vs 21 -** By law, he means an **established principle.** So I find (a principle that I must never forget) when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

**Two things about this:**

1. **This language comes from Genesis:**

*“The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it."” (Ge 4:6-7 ESV)*

1. **It is a warning for us…**

Sin is always close by (Gen 4:6-7), Satan no doubt, often desires to sift us like wheat (Luk 22:31). Therefore, be on guard, for our adversary the devil is going about as a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (IPet 5:8)!

**Vs 22 -** Here Paul highlights this dichotomy that exists within us.Notice Paul joyfully embraces the laws of God. He delights in God’s law, in his inner, spiritual essence.

In his inner man, his spiritual essence, that which has been redeemed, Paul says that he “delights” in the law of God, which Paul had told us earlier was spiritual.

This is language directly from the Psalms:

*“1 ¶ Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.” (Ps 1:1-2 ESV)*

*“I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.” (Ps 119:16 ESV)*

**Vs 23 -** Having no more than completed the statement, I delight in the law of God, Paul then leads with the conjunction:

BUT… Now, with sin still personified the situation is presented in a much more graphic and more serious way.

**Now he looks within his own body (his members) and he sees a warfare.** It is like his fleshy fallen nature is in a free for all against his redeemed spiritual nature.

The same is true for you and I.

**Chuck Missler:** *“The indwelling principle of sin is constantly mounting a military campaign against the new nature, trying to gain victory and control (cf. “slave” in vv. 14, 25 and “slaves” in 6:17, 19-20), of a believer and his actions.”*

**Vs 24 - Wretched man that I am...** Ever been here?

Paul’s cry for help shows that he understands **his help must proceed from somewhere else**. It cannot come from within and it will not come from the law.

Indeed, the necessary help must come from someone else. The capabilities needed deliver us do not lie in the old man or the law. This is the death-nail of legalism and self-righteous behavior.

**Vs 25 - Thanks be to God, thought Jesus the Messiah who is our Lord!**

By the way, the thanks is present tense! Paul is now thanking God, for both a current and future deliverance.

**With my mind, I serve God.** I understand the body has not yet been redeemed and I must work to bring it under subjection to my mind and to my spiritual desires.

But in justification the power of sin has been broken, and I can now, walk with God, I can resist the old man and his old ways. I have been brought into the Kingdom of God and I can now resist the sinful passions of the flesh.

**Equally,** **The Lord is coming back. One day, we will all receive glorified bodies.**

As we wrap up, consider the picture one more time, in particular the language of verse 54:

*“51 ¶ Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."” (1Co 15:51-54 ESV)*

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