

Here Paul has made the point that both Jew and Gentile alike are justified by grace alone and through faith alone. Because the Law can only “*bring wrath*,” God must **justify by grace through faith** “*not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham*.” See here then the circumcised and the uncircumcised can be justified in only one way which is apart from human works and comes only as a gift of grace to those who have faith in Christ. This is the meaning of the Law and Gospel contrast. The Gospel of the Person and Work of Christ brings justification and righteousness before God that the Law only exposes the need for and cannot provide since all have sinned and fallen short of God’s glorious judgment by the Law. It is by grace, through faith, in Christ alone that salvation from sin and righteousness before God can be attained.

Now to further the discussion and describe the role and purpose of the Law, Paul gives a brief sketch of redemptive history in regard to sin and death, Law and grace in Romans 5:12-21. It is here where he highlights the concept of sin entering the world through one man’s disobedience and spreading therefore to all humanity, and grace being a gift through the obedience of one man and spreading to those who receive it.

**Romans 5:19-21** - 19 For as through the **one man’s disobedience** the many were made sinners, even so through the **obedience of the One** the many will be made righteous. 20 And **the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more**, 21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. NASB

Here Paul clearly states that the purpose of the Law was to “*increase transgression*.” This is to say that through the definitive guidelines of the Law, sin has been clarified and shown to be exactly what it is, as we have seen “*through the Law comes the knowledge of sin*” (Rom 3:20). It is here then that Paul highlights **God’s purpose in redemptive history to bring a massive transition by grace through faith in Christ** in order to conquer sin and death so that “*grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*.” It is here where Paul shows the purpose of the Law and Grace by introducing two new contrasts. These of course are the **Flesh-Spirit** contrast and the **Law-Spirit** contrast. He does this by contrasting the effects of the Old and the New Covenant ages. He explains that we have died to sin by faith with Christ so that we can walk in newness of life. These are references to the effects of the **NEW** Gospel age we have entered, in contrast to **OLD** Law age we have been delivered from by grace.

**Romans 6:4-14** - Therefore we have **been buried with Him through baptism into death**, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might **walk in newness of life**. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that **our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin**. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body** that you should obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, **for you are not under law, but under grace**. NASB

Paul insists that since “*our old self was crucified with Him*,” that now we have become “*alive from the dead*” because we “*are not under the Law, but under grace*.” Because of this new Gospel reality Paul insists that we are to “*consider ourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus*.” He therefore contrasts the **OLD** way of sin reigning in death with the **NEW**

way of being *“dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”* Therefore the Gospel has brought a *“newness of life”* (v-4), because we have *“died with Christ”* (v-8), and so we must *“no longer let sin reign in our mortal body”* (v-12), because *“sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace”* (v-14). See here the transition that has taken place in the Gospel which Paul describes as *“not under law but under grace.”* Now in chapter 7 & 8 of Romans Paul then furthers his discussion by showing that the Law reveals the struggle with *“sin in our mortal body”* by showing us the true nature of the flesh, our old crucified self, and driving us to faith in Christ, and the great dependence we have on the Gospel and the power that is brought to us by the Spirit. In this he contrasts the **OLD** way of being *“bound”* to the Law which bore *“fruit for death”* (v-5), with the **NEW** way of dying *“to the Law”* (v-4) and being *“released from the Law”* (v-6), so that we *“bear fruit for God”* (v-4), and *“serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter”* (v-6).

**Romans 7:4-6** - 4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to **die to the Law through the body of Christ**, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might **bear fruit for God**. 5 For **while we were in the flesh**, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to **bear fruit for death**. 6 **But now** we have been **released from the Law**, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we **serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter**. NASB

See again the contrast between the **OLD** and the **NEW** in that we were bound by the Law, *“**but now have been released from the Law**”* and this has brought about the *“newness of the Spirit”* in contrast to the *“oldness of the letter.”* See here Paul describing the **OLD ineffectual** way of the **Law** compared to the **NEW effectual** way of the **Spirit**. He explains that the Law’s purpose is to show us the holy nature of God and our utter inability to overcome sin because of the exceeding weakness of the flesh, so that the Law brings death and kills us (v-11).

**Romans 7:10-11** - 10 and this commandment, which was to result in life, **proved to result in death for me; 11 for sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and through it killed me**. NASB

In this he explains that the Law is *“holy and righteous and good,”* but because of the weakness of the flesh and indwelling sin, we are shown to be utterly sinful as we see ourselves in the mirror of the Law.

**Romans 7:12-13** - 12 So then, **the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good**. 13 Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, that through the commandment **sin might become utterly sinful**. NASB

Through the Law then, seeing the sin which is in us, he then explains the great war and struggle between the flesh and the Law of God in the inner man.

**Romans 7:22-23** - 22 For **I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members**. 24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. NASB

He shows that the Law can only bring despair and condemnation and we must have a deliverer from this bondage which in fact is provided in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And this brings us to the good news of the Gospel and the victory that it brings through Christ and the Spirit. It is this discussion that Paul highlights in chapter 8.

**Romans 8:1** - 1 There is **therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**. NASB Notice here the *“therefore”* of chapter 8 verse 1. Here Paul refers to the entire scope of all that he has explained thus far in Romans, and not just the immediate preceding verses. This is the crescendo of the symphony of Gospel truths that has been laid out before us, *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”* Chapters 1 thru 3 layout the