

# ROMANS RAMBLINGS



## **The Romans Laws**

Romans 7:7 *“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.”*

In Romans 8:4 it says *“so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”* Jesus came to earth as a human to solve a few things. The first was the misconception between law and the intent of the law. God gave Moses his law. First and foremost, this law was ten simple commands. We call them the Ten Commandments. If you read on, God expanded those laws into sub-laws. They range from disputes to payments for offences. Through the centuries the religious rulers expanded the law to 613 commandments. One of the reasons God sent Jesus was to clarify a few things.

There is a curious section in Matthew 15:3-6 *“Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ 5 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ 6 they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus, you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.”* By the time that Jesus arrived, the religious rulers had put more importance on keeping the law than the welfare of people. Jesus clarified that people are more important than the law.

What is the Law of God that Paul talks about? I suppose it is many things. The Jewish people did have the law of God. Some call it the law of Moses. We could say that God's first law was *don't eat of the tree: the knowledge of good and evil*. Then God gave us the Ten Commandments. If you take a look at those laws or commands, they tend to say: treat people, God, and yourself with respect. Love God first, honor your parents, and keep the sabbath to rest. The Spirit of the law is harmony with those in your life. It might include not murdering people or stealing their wife. The spirit and heart of Gods law is where justice lies.

The laws of God encompass five other laws that Paul talks about in Romans. We have the law of mind, spirit, sin, Moses, and faith. Some of these laws are contrary to Gods law. Yet, each one plays a roll in how we view Gods law. Jesus biggest reaction to the religious rulers comes from the intent of the law. In Mark 4, Jesus and his disciples are picking grain because they were hungry. It actually was a law of God to feed the poor by leaving a portion of your field for them to glean (pick). Yet, another law said don't work on the sabbath. They were doing both. The argument was over keeping the law as opposed to feeding the poor. Which would God choose?

Jesus was said to be very angry with the religious rulers. Why? It's because they would rather have people starve to uphold the law. In fact, they walked away from the argument and began to plan how to kill Jesus. These men would rather kill than feed the poor. They would even kill to uphold the law. Jesus was trying to say that Gods care and love for the hungry outweigh the intent of the law. Should you rest on the sabbath? Yes! Should the poor go hungry on the sabbath? No!

Romans 7:21-23 *"So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at*

*work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.* Think about Romans 7:7. We know sin because God defined it in His law. Yet, the law of pride, arrogance, and human nature wars against human decency. We want to look holy, even at the expense of others. Paul's view of the law of God is consistent with Jesus' view. The Spirit of the law is more powerful than the intent of the law. As we go through these other five laws that Paul talks about in Romans, think about how they fight against God's laws He gave so many centuries before. What war is raging within you? What does God desire compared to what you desire? Paul and Jesus experienced this war all too well. Welcome to the Romans laws!