# **METRO NEW YORK WORLD MINISTRIES**

## ADULT SABBATH SCHOOL CONTRIBUTING NOTES

### May 3-9, 2014

#### Lesson: Christ’s Death and the Law

This week’s lesson referred mostly to chapters seven and eight of Romans. In our Sabbath School Notes for this week, we have provided (1) a commentary on Romans 7:1-8:7, and (3) a concern about a tendency on the part of some to use Catholic sources in our SDA Adult Sabbath School Lessons.

##### Part One of our Sabbath School Notes

##### Romans 7:1-8:7

“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?” Romans 7:1

Paul had previously argued that we were under the dominion of sin. To be “under the law” was to be under sin because the law cannot save you. As long as the old man is alive, you will keep on breaking God’s law.

“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Romans 7:2-4

In this illustration we have the woman, the husband, and the law. Let us call the woman Mrs. Smith. The husband would then be Mr. Smith. The law permits Mrs. Smith to remarry if her husband dies. But if Mr. Smith is still alive, then she is not, according to the law, free to marry another man.

Is Mrs. Smith permitted to marry another man because the law has died? No. She can only remarry if her husband dies.

What is then is represented by these two husbands. The first husband represents our unconverted state. This is the state that we are born with. You might say we are married to it from birth.

The second husband represents Jesus. We can be married to Jesus if our old nature dies. This passages actually encourages us to be married to another, namely, we are to be married to Christ. Paul encourages us to die to the old man. Let us die to that first husband, our unconverted state.

However, we cannot be married to Christ if the old man is still alive. As long as we choose to sin we are married to the old man.

“For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” Romans 7:5

“in the flesh”

The phrase “in the flesh” refers to being “married to the old man.” When we are “in the flesh” we are living according to the impulses of the flesh. We are living according to the impulses of our lower nature of appetite, passions, and desires. If it tastes good, we eat it. If it feels good, we do it. If we want it, we get it.

“motions of sin”

The “motions of sin” are our passions for sin. By giving in to the impulses of our fallen flesh, we have developed certain passions for sin.

“which were by the law”

The law does not permit sin. What the law does is that it reveals sin. By looking to the law our sinful tendencies are revealed.

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” Romans 7:6

But now we are delivered from the old man. We are no longer serving sin. We are no longer trying to earn salvation by the works of the law. The law revealed to us the new of a new husband. We now know that we need Christ as our husband. The old man must die. Now we are living according to the Spirit that gives us the power to live a new life. No longer are we trying to live by the letter of the law in our own strength.

“What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Romans 7:7

When we look into a mirror it reveals our appearance. If we do not like our appearance it is not the fault of the mirror. In the same way, the law reveals sin. The law is not evil, man is evil. The law reveals the evil in man. And God is not the Author of sin because His law exposes sin.

Paul began to realize how sinful he really was when he had a greater spiritual understanding of the tenth commandment, “Thou shalt not covet.” He began to see that everything he did was self-centered.

“But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.” Romans 7:8

When you say to an unregenerated man, “You cannot have this,” sometimes the forbidden object makes him want it all the more. For example, the law that forbids alcohol until you reach a certain age does something to the unregenerated heart. Such a law can tempt the teen to want to drink all the more. This doesn’t make the law evil, but it reveals our sinful natures.

A sinner may seem at peace, but when the law is presented to him, he can become enraged against the law of God. He spurns its authority. He is determined to show his independents and he sins all the more.

Saul of Taursus [Paul] was convicted that Stephen was a just man. To overcome his guilt from the stoning of Stephen he persecuted the church all the more.

“without the law”

On the other hand, when a man is not under the conviction of the law, the unregenerated man does not knowingly live in fierce opposition to God. This man continues to live in sin without a thought about God.

“For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” Romans 7:9

“I was alive”

There was a time when Paul, while yet unconverted, depended upon his own righteousness. As far as he could see at the time he was right with God.

“without the law once”

During this time, he seemed to be outwardly keeping God’s law. Speaking of his previous experience as a Pharisee, Paul wrote, “Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” Philippians 3:4-6

But when the true meaning of the law appeared, sin appeared.

Many individuals of the Jewish faith felt they were obedient to the law. For example, “The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?” Matthew 19:20

Again we read, “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men [are], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” Luke 18:11, 12

“I died”

With this new and deeper understanding of God’s law appeared, he true sinful condition appeared. The law now condemned him as a transgressor worthy of death.

# **“And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.” Romans 7:10**

Paul “found” that the law condemned his covetousness and that the law could not save him, nor could he save himself by the works of the law. But the law does point the way to a better life. In fact, the law was “ordained” to reveal that life. A life that does not steal or bear false witness is a beautiful life. But we cannot obtain that life from the law. The law will condemn every act that is not in agreement with its precepts. Therefore, while God’s moral law describes the perfect life, it will condemn us when we are living in sin.

# **“For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” Romans 7:11**

Sin is deceptive. For example, Satan used the divine prohibition “Thou shalt not eat thereof” as a way of tempting Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit. Satan presented the forbidden fruit as something desirable. He knew that if he could get Eve to see it as desirable, then she would begin to think that it was good for her. However, when she obtained the forbidden fruit, it later proved to be death.

Solomon describes this deception, saying, “With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.” Proverbs 7:21-23

# **“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Romans 7:12**

Since God is holy His law is holy. All His commandments are holy, just, and good. So the problem is not with the law, but with our fallen natures inclined to do evil.

“Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” Romans 7:13

The law, which is good, did not bring death to me. Sin brought death to me. The law neither causes us to sin, nor does it bring death. The law reveals sin, and sin worketh death. The greater my spiritual understanding of God’s law the greater my sins will appear. The greater my sins appear, the more I realize that it is my sins that brings death and destruction.

# **“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.” Romans 7:14**

I am carnal. I have a fallen nature. With that nature I am under the power of sin. In this carnal nature I struggle with the tendencies to sin. It is like I am sold under sin.

“For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” Romans 7:15

Having lived as a Pharisee for so many years trying to keep the law in his own strength, Paul know realizes how miserably he truly failed. He is now aware of the deeper meaning behind each commandment. He is under conviction of how spiritual the law truly is, and how selfish his life had been. He now realizes that in his carnal nature he could not possible to what the law truly says. He knows that he would always do what he should not do.

Consider the following commandment, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Now consider these comments on the ninth commandment, which read, “False speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. An intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All intentional overstatement, every hint or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or exaggerated impression, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to injure our neighbor's reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale bearing. Even the intentional suppression of truth, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment.” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 309

Have you ever given a false impression? Have you ever made an intentional overstatement? Have you ever given an exaggerated impression? We all have. But imagine a life whereby you would never give a false impression in any form or fashion. Now that is a beautiful life.

Paul realized that in his best Pharisee days he never really kept the ninth commandment. He realized that in his carnal nature he could never ever keep this commandment even if he wanted to. His only hope would be to die to the old nature and be raised up into newness of life by the power of the Holy Spirit.

# **“If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.” Romans 7:16**

What an important spiritual lesson to realize that the law is good and that we are sinful. He is no longer in fierce opposition to the law. He is no longer self-righteous. He now sees himself as he truly is, namely, a sinner in need of a Savior.

“Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

Paul is not suggesting that he is not accountable for his sins. He knows that the wages of sin brings death. He knows that God will judge all sinners, whether Jew or Gentile. But he recognizes that something in himself compels him to do wrong. He knows that his flesh is weak.

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” Romans 7:18

He wants to do what is right. But he does not know how to do what is right. He realizes that his fallen nature is working against him.

# **“For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.” Romans 7:19**

He has acknowledged that the law is good. He admits that he has failed to do that which is good. He knows that he is committing sins that he should not be doing. He wants to do what is right. He even wills it. But how do you effectively exercise your will to do the will of God? That is the question.

# **“Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” Romans 7:20**

If I commit sins that I do not want to do, then there is something in me that compels me to sin. It is the power of my sinful tendencies, both cultivated and inherited.

# **“I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.” Romans 7:21**

I find that it is not enough to desire to do good. I am in a war against my sinful nature. This sinful nature is with me everywhere I go.

# **“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:” Romans 7:22**

I rejoice that the law is good. I truly want to live that beautiful life in accordance with God’s law.

“But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Romans 7:23

However, I see something else working inside of me. It wars against my desire to obey God’s law. It tempts me to break God’s law.

# **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Romans 7:24**

Paul realizes that he cannot save himself. After all, he cannot do what he wants to do, and he does what he knows he should not. But now he is in that very important place of admitting his helplessness. He needs divine help.

“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” Romans 7:25

Even though my mind wants to serve God, my body wants to sin. But I thank God that He is more powerful than my sinful tendencies. The evil that is within me can defeat me, but it cannot defeat God. Through Christ I can keep the law of God perfectly. I can do all that God asks. I can refrain from all evil, if I am dead to the old man and married to Christ.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:1

If we are in Christ and walk after the Spirit we are no longer under condemnation of the law, because we are not keeping law by the power of God.

The law is holy, just, and good and it will always condemn sin no matter who commits it. Christ came not to condemn us, but to free us from sin. He came to pay the penalty for our sins, which is death. In Him we have life, even life eternal.

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:2

On one side we have sin and death. On the other side we have the Spirit and life. To be free from the “law of sin and death,” we must abide by rule of the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ.”

The law of the Spirit of life is the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. A “law” is a rule. We allow the Holy Spirit to rule over us, that we may be free from the “law of sin and death.” This freedom from sin is possible because it is the law of the Spirit of life “in Christ.” When we allow the Holy Spirit to rule, we are allowing the life of Christ to rule. The impartation of the Holy Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. We are set free from sin by receiving the sinless life of Christ. His righteousness becomes our own.

“hath made me free”

We were slaves to sin. Sin ruled in our life. But the Holy Spirit is able to destroy sin in our life and set us free. He can do this, if we desire the life of Christ. Nay, more than this, we must exercise our faith to receive the life of Christ. Our freedom from sin is based upon our reception of the righteousness of Christ.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:” Romans 8:3

Paul has already argued that the law is spiritual, holy, just, and good. It reveals sin. It describes a life of righteousness. However, the law cannot give us righteousness. The law cannot justify me. The law cannot free me from sin. The problem is the weakness of our flesh.

So God the Father sent His own Son to condemn sin in the flesh. Jesus condemned sin as a way of living in our flesh. He did this by living a life of sinlessness. He kept His Father’s commandments perfectly. He never sinned, not even by a thought.

Christ lived this sinless life in our sinful flesh. He became one of us. After four thousand years of sin, Christ came in our fallen nature. But He never participated in our sins. He was the sinless Son of God.

“sinful flesh”

Elsewhere Paul spoke about Jesus becoming a partaker of our flesh and blood. Jesus was of the seed of Abraham. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on [him the nature of] angels; but he took on [him] the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto [his] brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things [pertaining] to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Hebrews 2:14-18

Because Jesus become one of us, we find that He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:14-16

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Romans 8:4

God did not give us His Son to abolish the law. He did not give us His Son to release from obedience to His law. God gave His Son so that the law could be fulfilled in our lives perfectly.

The law is an expression of God’s own moral character. Since God cannot change, His law cannot change. An unsanctified man cannot keep this law. But a man who is justified by the blood of Christ and sanctified through the Holy Spirit can.

We are now to “walk” after the Spirit. The word “work” refers to habits and conduct. With our new natures in Christ we are learning new habits. We are conducting our lives in a new way.

We are no longer walking “after the flesh.” We are no longer living according to our sinful tendencies.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit we are receiving the life of Jesus. And who is Jesus? He is the sinless One. He is the One who keep the commandments perfectly. When I receive Him I am receiving His sinless, perfect, and righteous life. This is how the law is fulfilled in us.

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” Romans 8:5

If we live in the flesh, then we will “mind” the things of the flesh. We will think, live, and walk according to our selfish desires and impulses. Our only hope is to walk in the Spirit.

# **“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Romans 8:6**

“carnally minded”

To be carnally minded tis to mind the things of the flesh. For example, the stomach says, “I want to eat that.” Your mind tells you that it is unhealthy, but the mind gives into the flesh and you eat that unhealthy food to your physical detriment.

From this example we can see that to be “carnally minded” bring an earlier “death.” But to think only of gratifying the flesh is death as well. The one who lives for selfish pleasure doesn’t really know what life is about. Eternal life is about service, love, giving, kindness, patience, meekness, and more. A life of selfishness brings death because you miss out on life.

Selfishness, hatred, envy, malice, and such, are not life. They are death. Not only do they cast a dark shadow on all around, but such a life will never receive eternal life.

But to be spiritually minded is life and peace. When we think upon that which is good, we not only become a blessing here in this present world, but we are preparing ourselves for the world to come.

What is life? “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:11, 12.

To be spiritually minded is to have the Holy Spirit. To have the Holy Spirit is to have the life of Christ. To have the life of Christ is to have life. What kind of life is this? It is a life in perfect obedience to God’s commands. It is eternal life.

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Romans 8:7

The carnal mind is dedicated to a life of self-indulgence and selfishness. Such a life will be in conflict with God’s law of selflessness. In fact, a carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God. Such a mind would never take orders from God, it is too self-centered.

Compiled by Pastor Wehr

Part Two of our Sabbath School Notes: Reference to Catholic authors in the SDA Sabbath School Quarterly

ADULT SDA QUARTERLY 2011 October - December

Below are names of - non-SDA authors quoted in the SDA Adult Quarterly – and statements that describe some of their beliefs and or ministry which are posted on the internet. The reason that this is being brought to your attention is that there is grave concern why the producers of our quarterly would quote from these commentators who would have doctrinal views that differ so decidedly from the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist faith.

October – December 2011

Page 89 – Ben Witherington III “An active proponent of the gender-neutral TNIV as an improvement over the NIV.”

“Considered one of the top evangelical scholars in the world…”

Page 90 – Timothy George – Dean of Beeson Divinity School - “He has been active in Evangelical – Roman Catholic church dialogue…” Also quoted on pages 75, 76, 107, 109 of the SDA adult quarterly 2011.

Page 25 – James D.G. Dunn – “A former Joseph McCarthy visiting professor at the Gregorian University in Rome….”

From the official Gregorian University Website

“The Pontifical Gregorian University, located in Rome Italy. Heir of the college founded by Saint Ignatius of Loyola over 460 years ago, the Gregorian University was the first university founded by the Jesuits.”

“The majority of the professors are of the Jesuit Order.”

Page 65 – Frank Matera – A Catholic priest - “…is Professor of Biblical studies at the Catholic University of America. He is already well known for his work on…NT ethics, Galatians..”

SDA quarterly Dec. 22, 2012 p. 104: Sir Thomas More is quoted:

On the internet it says: He was canonized by Pope Pious Xl in 1935 and since then has been known as St. Thomas More. He was an opponent of the Reformation - especially Martin Luther and William Tyndale.

“There was a darker side to Mores life. He advocated the extermination of Protestants and approved the burning of people alive who were caught with banned books.”

Notice the following statement from Facts of Faith – “Ever since the first “Index of Prohibited Books: was issued by Pope Paul IV, in 1599, the Bible has had a prominent place in these lists of forbidden books.”

See page 12 and 70 2nd quarter 2013: Author Abraham J Heschel (1907-1972) is quoted:

On the internet it says: “He served on the faculty of Hebrew Union College the main Seminary of Reform Judaism.

In 1946 he took a position at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America the main seminary of conservative Judaism, where he served as professor of Jewish ethics and mysticism until his death in 1972….

Heschel is among the few widely read Jewish Theologians….At the Vatican Council II, as representative of American Jews, Heschel persuaded the Roman Catholic Church to eliminate or modify passages in its liturgy that demeaned the Jews, or expected their conversion to Christianity. His Theological works argued that religious experience is a fundamentally human impulse, not just a Jewish one, and that no religious community could claim a monopoly on religious truth.”

In the April-June 2014 adult SDA quarterly page 11 is a quote from:

Leslie J. Hoppe. You may look his name up on the internet and will find some among other things the following statements:

“He has served the Director of CTU’s (Catholic Theological Union’s) Biblical study and travel programs….”

“He has written several other books and many articles in the area of Old Testament interpretation and biblical archaeology…”

“He is the general editor of the Catholic Biblical Quarterly and has served on the editorial boards of Old Testament Abstracts and The Bible Today and as general editor of the latter. He is the associate editor of the Anselm Press Study Bible….

In addition to his service at CTU, he has been visiting professor at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, and the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum.

He is a member of the Assumption Province Order of Friars Minor and a Roman Catholic Priest.”

Look up on You Tube – False Verses True Gospel – exposing more quarterly heresy teachings. A 20 Minute video.

In all due respect for the persons named above – because they also are the purchase of the blood of Christ – but why are the producers of the SDA quarterly seeking out these sources as reliable commentators on the word of God! – when - SDA’s have been called to separate from the errors and heresies of Babylon.

Compiled by Pastor Millard