

Study in Romans

Doctrine > Good News > Temporal Blessings > Law's Light Reveals Sin's Ugly Reality
Romans 7:7-13

One of the things Paul has been addressing throughout Romans is, "How do we make the invisible visible?" Answer: By its results. For example, the wrath of God in chapter 1 is invisible until it is seen in the results of relational and rational breakdown. People living in open rebellion against God's law lose their relationships to God, to one another, to creation, and to their own bodies and minds.

In these verses, Paul is answering the question, "Since the law brings death, it must therefore be sin since the wages of sin is death." Paul points out that the law is not the problem, sin is the problem. The law is merely a diagnostic tool that reveals what would otherwise be invisible to us; it makes the invisible sin visible. Death and destruction reveal sin, but so also does the law. While it is intended to bring us life and constrain sinful behavior, it in fact reveals sin's presence by producing every kind of evil desire. The more law increases, the more law-breakers increase.

1. The principle of sin's reality seen in the law with the example of coveting (vv. 7-8)
2. Sin's true ugliness in Paul's own experience (vv. 9-11)
3. Conclusion: sin is the problem, not the law (vv. 12-13)