Sermon- Fourth Pent. 2020 June 27 & 28

Title: Law and Sin

Text: Rom. 7:1-13

Prayer

 “Did that which is good, (the Law) 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 without measure.”

Salutation

**Bridge**

 **Sometimes watching our children grow is painful. Especially when they are very young. I remember when my son was about two years old and his first encounter with a hot burner on a stove. Of course, this is a perfect example of the adage, “Curiosity killed the cat”. We had finished eating and I had made us breakfast, but I had left the burner on low afterward as I was trying to keep the sausage warm while I made the scrambled eggs. Then, forgetting to turn it off, it was still quite warm. I was doing the dishes and my son, not knowing how a stove worked, not knowing that he could burn himself, placed his hand on that front burner that dad had forgotten to turn off. He screeched out in pain, burning his little finger, which I immediately ran cold water upon. He had no idea what this was, this new experience of burning, which sin always brings. He did not know the law of heat conduction. He simply *did not know*, and it was almost as painful for me to watch, (because I had failed him), as it was for him to experience the burn. It was a learning experience for us both. Now, we both knew better. For me, to leave a burner on. For him, to go near a hot stove.**

**Law**

 **And that’s the way it is for us, *God’s* *children*. He cringes when He sees us burn ourselves. There has been much “burning” going on as of late. Sin all around us. And our Heavenly Father hates it when we sin. Jesus warned us in Matt. 10:28 about the justice of the Father saying, “Rather fear Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell.” Now *that*, is some intense burning! But out of love, He gave us the Law to protect us, and the law is therefore good. Even in society, laws are the restraint that make us free! The law keeps us on the path and that’s the first of the three purposes of the law, isn’t it? As a curb, the law protects us, like bumpers on the lane of a bowling alley they keep us from going into the gutter. The law isn’t made for a righteous man, but it’s made for sinners who get burnt like we do. The second purpose is as a mirror. God wanted us to see and KNOW. My son didn’t know he would be burned, even though he may have seen that the burner was red hot. And in verse seven of the text Paul says, “I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, “Thou shall not covet”.” That is a sure-fire way to be burned! To act upon what the law shows, leads to sin in abundance! It’s fun to sin! Isn’t it?**

**The third purpose is a rule. It shows us how to life a Godly life. It is letting the light of the Gospel show us the way of Christ. So then, how are we to keep the law? Well, I’ll tell you what Jesus said in Matthew 5:48; “You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Remember that and let me know how well you do it next weekend if Pastor Doug gives you the rest of Paul’s words about sin in this chapter! I am just kidding, but I do want you to remember what God wants and needs from us in order to be saved. Because we cannot do it. Bring to mind ALL you favorite sins. You KNOW what they are! Honestly, just think about all the categories of your sins! We sinful humans cannot fulfill the law unto our salvation. It’s impossible! And Paul told that to the Galatians saying, “Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for the righteous shall live by faith.****”**

 **Later in the book of Romans than our text for today, Paul tells us that on the cross, how Jesus fulfilled it all, how He set us free, from the whole law- for us. Because, even though God placed the Law for as good, we, because of our sinful nature, just- cannot keep it perfectly. I know I have said many times, “I’ve been burnt like that before!” I know you have as well. Sometimes, we learn to keep our hands away from the fire. And even though we have a curb, mirror, and rule, to help us to do that, the righteousness of men is inadequate. Paul said in Romans 10:4, “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” That is Good News. Only through Christ can we be deemed righteous to the Father. By repentance and *faith* that is completed. Praise God for this imputed righteousness in our lives.**

**Gospel**

**And that Good News in the text is found in verses 4-6, which correspond to the third use of the law. We are dead to the law through Christ. That occurred there- when you were sealed unto Him in your baptism. Sin no longer holds us. You know, Paul said we were dead to sin back in chapter six, but he warned us there that even though we are dead to sin, free from it in Christ, we must not ever *remain* in it, that God’s grace may abound. The third use of the Law shows us the proper way. He says in verse six, “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.” By faith we follow Christ and His Ways of loving God and our neighbor as ourselves. Luther once said about people who forget this,**

**“For there is no such Christ that died for sinners who do not, after the forgiveness of sins, desist from sins and lead a new life.”**

**For the truly repentant, it is believing that they are a sinner and then REALLY BELIEVING CHRIST BY LEAVING THE LIFE OF SIN BEHIND, AND BE HEALED INTO THE SANCTIFIED LIFE!!!**

 **Our Psalm today is a GREAT illustration of our condition and freedom in Christ. Let me read it for you: Psalm 119:153-154**

 **“Look on my affliction and deliver me, for I do not forget Your Law. Plead my cause and redeem me; give me life according to Your promise!”**

 **Our afflictions, our sins, our problems may be a burn, or something else, because in this sinful world, they change daily and there are many. We cry out knowing how we have failed God to keep His law. *But in Christ the Good News is that He keeps His promises to us! Christ has delivered us from all our afflictions and has set us free. He Walks with us and He tells us we are His own! He grabs our hand when we stick it in the flame and pleads to the Father to heal it! And He sends the Spirit to remind us that’s fire burns. He never leaves us faithful alone, for we are His!***

**Conclusion**

 **I asked Gary if he remembers the first time that he was burned that day. He said no, just other traumatic boo-boos. The important thing is *if you do*! Do you remember that first time you burned yourself? I do. It was in the back yard of my parents first house at a picnic. I grabbed the hot metal marshmallow stick. Back then, home remedies were the way to treat these burns, so they put butter on my burn. It made it worse, as we all know today. Sometimes the remedy is worse than the burn and our human remedies fail. And everyone learns from them. However, we all smile when things are fixed. God smiles when He sees all our aliments fixed—In Jesus. When He looks at Jesus’ hands and feet, He sees us- fixed. May we always faithfully remember as we walk with Him- that is the Good News. In Jesus’ name. Amen.**