

### Knowledge of Sin Exposes Spiritual Death, Romans 7:13

Romans 7:13 - Therefore, the good to me, did it become spiritual death? Definitely not! But the sinful nature, in order that it might be exposed through the good [of the Tenth Commandment], made spiritual death a reality to me in order that the sinful nature might become utterly sinful by means of the Tenth Commandment.

Paul again defends the Law by focusing on the sinful nature as the true culprit. In order that the sinful nature might be exposed, the Tenth Commandment informed Paul of his true status of spiritual death.

The word which is translated “*made spiritual death a reality to me*” is the present middle participle of the verb: *katergazomai* - “*to work out.*”

This is the same verb that is found in Philippians 2:12 which is translated into the English as “*work out your own salvation.*”

Our corrected translation from the Greek turned out to read as follows:

**Philippians 2:12** - So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed my teachings [over the past 15 years], not only in my presence but now much more in my absence, [*katergazomai*] continue the willing cultivation of your streams of consciousness to the ultimate conclusion of harvesting [*soteria*] your own deliverance from danger and your own preservation from persecution, accompanied by reverence and respect.

*katergazomai* carries the idea of cultivating the soil. It's use in Philippians by Paul refers to cultivating the soul through Bible study.

This cultivation involves the inculcation of divine thought into long-term memory traces which results in the transformation of the soul into a vessel of honor.

We see a similar process in Romans 7:13. Cognizance of the Tenth Commandment serves as a vector which enlightens Paul to the presence of his sinful nature within his members.

Any inculcation of truth results in cultivation of the stream of consciousness. In this context the cultivation of the Tenth Commandment “*made spiritual death a reality to Paul.*” In other words, when the Tenth Commandment was fully metabolized into a long-term memory trace, it immediately formed a constellation with facilitated wheel-tracks which Paul realized were children of his lust pattern.

The power of truth found in the divine revelation of the Mosaic Law brought Paul to the realization that he was indeed sinful. In a moment of objectivity, Paul realizes that he had an inordinate, unrestrained, and selfish desire accompanied by intense passion to possess things, either abstract or material. Knowledge of the Law resulted in a cultivation of thought in Paul's soul which brought him to a shocking conclusion:

**Romans 7:8** - But the sinful nature, having seized the opportunity through the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment, produced in me every category of lust, for apart from the Law sin is unknown.

**Romans 7:9** - Now at one time I lived apart from the Law but when the Tenth Commandment came into my conscious mind the sinful nature became invigorated and I realized I was spiritually dead.

And so, Paul reiterates the point in:

**Romans 7:9** - But the sinful nature, in order that it might be exposed through the good [of the Tenth Commandment], made spiritual death a reality to me ...

Paul was a theologian who desperately wanted to serve God but was doing so in the wrong way. As a zealous Pharisee, he was blindly convinced of the idea that righteousness and salvation were attainable through keeping the Law. The Tenth Commandment revealed to him that he was keeping the Law but only by its letter. In other words, he mistakenly assumed that righteousness was attained through human energy and not by grace orientation.

The Law's mission was fulfilled in Paul when he suddenly realized that not only was he violating the Law, the source of that violation was within himself and thus he was utterly sinful. The Law stated divine policy which was required in order to possess divine righteousness. His inability to keep the Tenth Commandment revealed to Paul the presence of the sinful nature within him and his status before God of spiritually dead.

We are now ready to begin our exegesis of the remaining verses of Romans 7. Before we get started on that, let's review the corrected translation of Romans 7:1–Romans 7:13.

**Romans 7:1** - Do you not know, fellow believers—for I communicate to those who know the Law—that the Mosaic Law has dominion over a person as long as he lives?

**Romans 7:2** - For the wife under the authority of her husband has been bound to her husband by law while he is living but if the husband has died she has been released by the law from her first husband.

**Romans 7:3** - Consequently, therefore, if while her husband is living she has become intimately united with another man, she shall be classified as an adulteress. But if her husband has died she is free from that Law so that she is not an adulteress though she is married to another man.

**Romans 7:4** - Therefore, fellow believers, you also were made to die with reference to the law by the human body of Christ with the result that you might belong to another, to the One who has been raised up from deaths in order that we might bear fruit to God.

**Romans 7:5** - For while we were in the flesh [under the authority of the sinful nature as first husband], the sinful trends, which through the Law were operative in our members, resulted in the production of fruit from the source of our spiritual death.

**Romans 7:6** - But now we have been released from the Law [as marriage counselor] by having died to that to which we were bound [the first marriage], in order that we might serve in a new marriage by the Holy Spirit [as marriage Counselor] and not in the old marriage by the letter of the Law.

**Romans 7:7** - Therefore, to what conclusion are we forced? Is the Law sin? Emphatically not! On the contrary. I was not cognizant of the sinful nature except through the Law. For example, I did not understand the lust pattern except the Law kept on saying, "You will not lust!"

**Romans 7:8** - But the sinful nature, having seized the opportunity through the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment, produced in me every category of lust, for apart from the Law sin is unknown.

**Romans 7:9** - Now at one time I lived apart from the Law but when the Tenth Commandment came into my conscious mind the sinful nature became invigorated and I realized I was spiritually dead.

**Romans 7:10** - That Commandment which points to eternal life [**the Tenth Commandment**]; the same was discovered by me pointing to spiritual death.

**Romans 7:11** - For the sinful nature, having seized the opportunity through the Tenth Commandment, deceived me and, through that same commandment, killed me.

**Romans 7:12** - Therefore, as a matter of fact, the Law is holy, also the Tenth Commandment is holy, perfect justice, and intrinsically good.

**Romans 7:13** - Therefore, the good to me, did it become spiritual death? Definitely not! But the sinful nature, in order that it might be exposed through the good [**of the Tenth Commandment**], made spiritual death a reality to me in order that the sinful nature might become utterly sinful by means of the Tenth Commandment.

Romans 7:14 is a good place to start our exegesis. It concludes the second paragraph of chapter 7 with a summary statement showing the contrast between the counselor and the wife of the first marriage.