

Raised With Christ: Bearing Fruit
By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison
July 21, 2019
Romans 7:1-12

DBS: Preview Enrollment Nights will be on July 30, Aug 1, Aug 6 and Aug 8 with the first class starting on Aug 13th.

Paul is condemned by 2 things: The Old Testament Law (which is good) that confronts him with the brutal fact: YOU ARE A SINNER. He was married to her (the Law) before something extraordinary happened – a new relationship with the Resurrected One. Paul never strays far from this central topic of Jesus' being raised from the dead. The Law was like a set of training wheels on a bicycle. It had its time and place. However, Jesus' resurrection took the training wheels off. It's time for a new way.

He follows up with the result that we should *"bear fruit for God."* Instead of living in the old way trying to be good and earn God's favor, it's time to shift into God's grace. The old way brought guilt, fear, condemnation and self-righteousness. The new way brings freedom, life and fruit.

APPLICATION: Jesus chose us for the purpose of bearing fruit. He wants a return on investment in us. How are you doing in this regard?

Interview Vaughn Story. Ask 2 Q's: **"Why** should anyone want to invest this amount of time in DBS?" **"How** can they do it?" One of the most important ways we can bear fruit is by learning, understanding and applying scripture. We are not left on our own. DBS is a wonderful opportunity to do this.

The "Meta-narrative" of the Bible:

1.) Creation (Genesis 1-2) GOOD

2.) The Fall – sin entered the world (Genesis 3) SIN

3.) The LAW. Read text 7:1-12 *Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? ² Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. ³ Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress. ⁴ Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵ For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we are released from the law,*

having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit. 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. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law, sin lies dead. ⁹ I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰ The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

A.) **The Law = Good** Do NOT read into this text that Paul is talking about divorce and re-marriage. If you read it that way, you've missed the point. He is talking about **The old way** of following the Rules (or not following them). The Law, is good. Psalm 119 tells God's Law is wonderful and perfect.

B.) **I'm Not** (Good with the Law) because of **sin**. The Law is NOT the problem. The Law confronts me with a problem. It is good – I am not. We should try to keep it, we cannot. THAT is our problem. Either by thought, word or deed we are guilty. *"We have not loved You and we have not heard the cry of the needy."* We are caught in a trap. We can TRY to be a good person and do our best. We try to improve and be better. We think if we perform well, we will be loved and accepted. But nobody can do it perfectly. The Law is perfect. We break the law. It is called "sin." We were married to a system of spiritual death: Sin leads to death. We go in one of two directions: we PRETEND, we are good. We condemn others. Or we DESPAIR – we just give up.

4.) **JESUS. The Apostles Creed** is primarily about Jesus. *"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth....and in Jesus Christ His Only Son, our Lord. Who was conceived by the HS, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under PP, was crucified, dead and buried. On the 3rd day he rose from the grave, ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead."* came for us (Incarnation/Crucifixion/Resurrection and Return). We need HELP. A drowning swimmer can dogpaddle and try to keep afloat – but needs a lifejacket. A lifejacket can let some virtually go to sleep in the water. I need something external – something outside to save me. Not myself. Jesus offers *the free gift*. We have a new system. It is not about us – but about Jesus. We no longer must follow the Law and be good to earn our salvation. (How could someone "earn salvation?") Jesus not only saved us by throwing us a lifejacket but extracted us

from the water and given us safety. The Gospel announces a whole new way. What was once lost can now be found. We can have a new identity in Him.

Jesus warned that false prophets can appear in sheep's clothing but are really ravenous wolves. Jesus is right. Wolves can have a bad impact – particularly for sheep. Yet, they are part of God's creation. This video shows how wolves can change the course of rivers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=ysa5OBhXz-Q>

God's creation is amazing. God made wolves, just as He made sheep (I don't understand mosquito's).

God created, we sinned and that has messed everything up. God also gave us the Law, but while the Law has a purpose, it really scares us to death. Just like removing the wolf from Yellowstone, God's purpose is not served by removing it. The Law cannot save us. Paul wanted to save himself but could not do so. We needed Help. It came, not by removing, destroying or ignoring the Law, but by fulfilling it. Jesus said He didn't come to ABOLISH the law, but to fulfill it. He is the Help we needed. And He gives us the Helper. Salvation is turning our old nature into something good and bearing fruit. We have an "old" nature – an old way of doing things. We can try to change our nature by being "good" – or we can come to Christ and allow His new nature to live within us.

Let me ask 2 questions:

- 1.) Do you think you'll go to heaven? If so, why?
- 2.) What are you doing to help others follow Jesus?

We go to heaven only by the merits of Jesus Christ. We do not go to heaven by working for it or by being a good person and keeping the Law. It is a gift to us. We are on a mission to help others follow Jesus. We should be the best equipped and most highly motivated people on earth. We have Good News to share. A major way we learn to "Help Others Follow Jesus" is by learning scripture. We can learn the big picture story of the message of Jesus – and we can pass that on to others.