

ROMANS 7:7–13

How Sin Hijacks God's Good Law

How a Law That Promised Life Produced My Death

Inductive Bible Study Guide

What is Inductive Bible Study?

Inductive Bible study is a method of examining a text and seeking to determine its teaching, meaning, and application through observation and questions designed to help us understand and apply what the text teaches. It involves four simple steps you can take on your own or in a group discussion.

1. READ

Read Romans 7:7–13 four or five times slowly. In a group, have different members read the passage aloud before beginning. Try reading it once in a different translation.

2. OBSERVE

What does the text say? Notice the repeated phrase Paul uses in verses 8 and 11, the contrast between law and sin, and the bold questions Paul asks — along with the forcefulness of his answers.

3. INTERPRET

What does the text mean? Identify the nature and intent of God's Law, how sin hijacked it, and what surprising benefits the Law still produces even after sin perverted it.

4. APPLY

How should this text change me? Where am I still trying to use the Law to fix what only the Gospel can cure? What truths must I embrace, and what step will I take this week?



Pastor Sam's sermon on Romans 7:7–13, "How Sin Hijacks God's Good Law" will help you trace how sin hijacked God's holy Law and how the Law's surprising benefits still point us to Christ. Scan the QR code or use the link provided to access the message before or during your study.

Reading the Text Together — Romans 7:7–13

- ▶ *Section I: The Nature of the Law — holy, righteous, and good (7:12)*
- ▶ *Section II: The Reason for the Law — given because of transgression (7:7)*
- ▶ *Section III: The Promise of the Law — Life! (7:10a)*
- ▶ *Section IV: The Perversion of the Law — sin hijacks what is good to produce death (7:10b–11)*
- ▶ *Section V: The Surprising Benefit of the Law — exposing and magnifying sin to lead us to Christ (7:13)*

OBSERVING THE TEXT CAREFULLY

Keep Romans 7:7–13 open before you as you work through questions 1–4.

1

Paul asks two bold, direct questions in this passage — one in 7:7 and one in 7:13 — and gives the same forceful two-word answer to both. What are the two questions, what is his answer, and what specific clarifications does he provide after each denial?

2

Find the phrase Paul repeats in 7:8 and 7:11. What is identical about the two sentences, and what is different? What did sin produce through the commandment in verse 8, and what did it do through the commandment in verse 11?

3

In 7:9–10, Paul describes a sequence of three stages in his own experience. What was his condition before the commandment came? What happened when the commandment arrived? And what became of the very commandment that was meant to give life?

4

Paul gives the reason for the Law's surprising benefit in the final clause of verse 13. What two purposes does he say God intended even through sin's deadly use of the Law? Write out the exact phrases and explain what each one means in your own words.

INTERPRETING THE TEXT THOUGHTFULLY

Pastor Sam's sermon on this passage will provide helpful context for questions 5–8.

5

The sermon identifies five aspects of the Law's nature in 7:12 — its character, content, form, and intent. What does it mean that the Law is holy, righteous, and good? If that is true, what does Paul say is the real source of the problem — and why does this matter so much for understanding how we are to fight sin today?

6

The sermon traces how sin "hijacked" the commandment and used it as a weapon in three parallel moments in history: in the Garden with Adam, in Israel with God's people, and in Paul's own life. What did sin seize upon in each case, and what did it produce? What does this consistent pattern reveal about the nature of sin and the nature of our flesh?

7

The sermon says the Law makes two things happen simultaneously: it exposes our deeds as sin, and it makes sin appear "exceedingly sinful." Why are both of these effects necessary? How does the commandment against coveting serve as Paul's example of a sin that goes deeper than actions and reaches the level of desire? Why is this revelation so devastating — and so necessary?

8

The sermon's conclusion is built on a chain of three steps: the Law strips away our denials and self-excuses, brings us to the end of ourselves, and then compels us to look outside ourselves for help. When we go to Moses for help, where does Moses point us? What three things does Jesus offer that the Law could never provide, and why is the final statement of the sermon — "I can't obey the Law, but I can obey the Gospel" — the hinge on which the entire passage turns?

APPLYING THE TEXT PERSONALLY

Ask yourself the tough questions from this text — questions 9–12.

9

The sermon describes how sin uses the commandment to arouse covetousness — strong desires for what God has forbidden. The sermon speculates that Paul may not have been able to silence his conscience over the tenth commandment even while keeping the others outwardly. What desire — not just action, but desire — do you find most difficult to bring fully under the lordship of Christ? What does this passage say about where that desire comes from and what to do with it?

10

Satan's strategy with the commandment was not to deny it, but to cast doubt on whether it was truly good: "Is this really what God said? Will obeying this really lead to the good you desire?" Where in your own life do you hear those same whispers about God's commands — that following them is restrictive, outdated, or not truly in your best interest? How does this passage equip you to answer that kind of doubt?

11

The sermon says the Law produces one of two responses when relied upon for sanctification: proud self-righteousness ("I keep the rules better than others") or soul-crushing despair ("I can never be good enough"). Which of these tendencies appears most in your life? How does the truth that Jesus is not just a greater Lawgiver but a great Law-Keeper — who fulfilled the Law for you and in you — address that specific tendency at its root?

12

The sermon closes with a direct question: "I can't obey the Law, but I can obey the Gospel." The Gospel command is to repent, turn to Christ, and place full trust in His finished work. Is there an area of your life where you are still trying to fix yourself through effort, discipline, or rule-keeping rather than by surrendering that area to Christ? What would it look like this week to stop striving and start trusting — to obey the Gospel rather than merely reaching for the Law?

A PRAYER TO CLOSE YOUR STUDY

Based on Romans 7:7–13

Holy Father, Your Law is holy, and Your commandment is holy and righteous and good. We declare this without reservation. You gave it to protect us, to provide a way for us to express our love for You, and to hold out the promise of life to those who walked in it. There is nothing wrong with what You made.

But we confess that sin seized the opportunity Your commandment provided — in our first father Adam, in Your people Israel, and in each of us — and used what was good to produce in us all kinds of covetousness, deception, and death. We have coveted what You forbade. We have desired what destroys. We have listened to the voice that questioned Your goodness rather than resting in the assurance of Your love.

Thank You that You did not abandon Your holy Law to the purpose to which sin hijacked it. You built into its very failure a surprising gift: it has shown us our sin for what it truly is — exceedingly sinful, deserving of death, and beyond our power to fix. It has brought us to the end of ourselves. And when we have nowhere left to turn, it points us — as Moses himself pointed us — to Someone greater.

Thank You for Jesus, who did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it — perfectly, completely, and on our behalf. He kept what we could not keep. He bore the penalty we deserved. And now He offers what the Law could never give: forgiveness of sin, the fullness of eternal life, and the astonishing privilege of being called Your own children.

Lord, help us this week to stop reaching for the Law to do what only the Gospel can accomplish. Help us to obey not just with our hands, but with our hearts — from the inside out, by the power of Your Spirit. May we walk today not as those striving to earn what they cannot earn, but as those resting in what Christ has already done. To Him be the glory. Amen.