

Do you live:

- ☐ Above the law
- ☐ Under the law
- ☐ Outside the law
- ☐ Free from the law

**How can
you know?**



**Why do you stay within
the speed limit?**



- ☐ Don't want a ticket
- ☐ Respect for the law
- ☐ It is safe & wise
- ☐ I don't stay within it
- ☐ I do whatever seems reasonable



***What does
life under
the Law
look like?***

Romans 7:1-13

***When ANY person
puts themselves under the Law
- a sense of sin, shame, & death
are the (inevitable) result.***

- This was the purpose of the Law.
- Our freedom comes not from moral reform but from moral redemption and death to the Law.
- The Gospel is not about our power to fulfill the Law but about our union with Christ who fulfilled, redeemed, and freed us from the Law.

Romans 7

“14 For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. 15 For that which I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. 16 But if I do the very thing I do not wish to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that it is good. 17 So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which indwells me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.”

“19 For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish. 20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. 22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.”

- Paul's confusion leads to insight

"24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin."

To whom is Paul referring in Romans 7

- pre conversion,
- post conversion,
- Apostle,
- anyone?

Paul is speaking to anyone under the law.

- To Christians - "I", "we", "brethren"
- who have been "freed from sins dominion" by faith in Christ
- but are yet living in an unrenewed "body of sin"
- and are tempted to wrongly subject themselves to the law which can only stir up sin and shame
- as Paul himself experiences whenever he looks at himself from "under law."
- The challenge is to see ourselves as complete "in Christ" as we walk according to (with reference to) the Spirit not according to the flesh under the law.
- NOTE: This seems consistent with other texts.

Romans 8:23

"And not only this, but also **we ourselves**, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of **our body**."

Spirit

"mind"
"inner man"
"wish / desire"
"new nature"

Flesh

"members"
"body of death"
"indwelling sin"
"old nature"

1 Corinthians 6

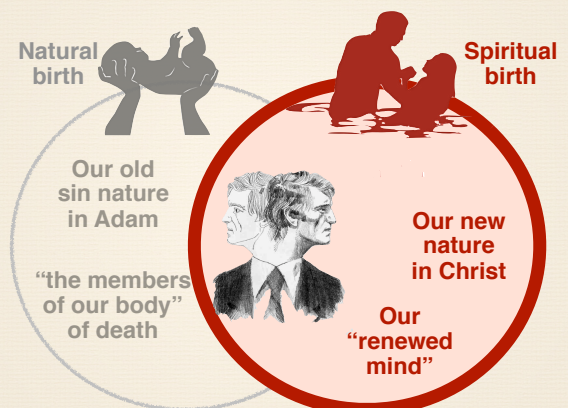
"18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

- Our identity "in Christ" (which is fixed) is to govern our behavior in this life (which is flexible).

Clarification

1. As believers we are now free from condemnation by the law in that we have died to it in Christ.
2. But we also live in conflict as our flesh, the "members of our body of death", await renewal at the resurrection where we will receive a new body.
3. When we place ourselves back under the law it arouses, convicts, and shames us in our sin and we lose our peace and sense of freedom.
4. We are now challenged to 1. not live under the law's judgment & shame, and 2. "present" or bring our body into submission and obedience to the Spirit of Christ in us.

We are to put off the old self and put on the new self



Philippians 3

"¹² Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³ Brethren, I **do not regard myself** as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: **forgetting what lies behind** and reaching forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ **I press on** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

- Seeing oneself as free from condemnation.
- Longing for the redemption of our bodies.
- Forgetting the past sin and shame.
- Pressing on and reaching forward to our calling.

Philippians 3

"²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ who **will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself."

- The transforming of the "members of our body of death" awaits Christ's second coming.

Galatians 5

"¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please."

- The MIND of Christ in me (the new and true SELF) is still tied to and in conflict with my flesh (the MEMBERS of my yet to be renewed body of death).

The culture of life under law

1. **Black & white** - life is reduced to a set of inflexible rules of right or wrong, in or out, good or evil.
Superficial traditions, culture, preferences, etc. become confused with (a part of) "God's will."
2. **Shame & blame** - someone is usually (always) at fault. It is hard (wrong) to forgive and forget in what becomes a score-keeping game of good vs. evil.
3. **Fear & control** - External change is unsettling so we need clear boundaries, many rules, and strong police. Diversity, differences, unanswered questions, threaten our security and are discouraged (forbidden).
4. **Whine & worry** - something is sure to go terribly wrong sooner or later and we will have a hard time (not be able) to recover.
Preoccupation with perfectionism in this life.

Three groups that need help

Live outside the Law

They have **no respect** for God or themselves as His image bearer.

A seared soul is the result.

They need to be **broken** by the Law.

Live under the Law

They seek God's favor through obedience to the Law.

Shame or pride is the result.

They need to be **liberated** from the Law.

Live above the Law

They use their freedom to feed the lusts of the flesh.

Carnality is the result.

They need to be **guided** by the Law.

Why do you stay within the speed limit?



Living under law

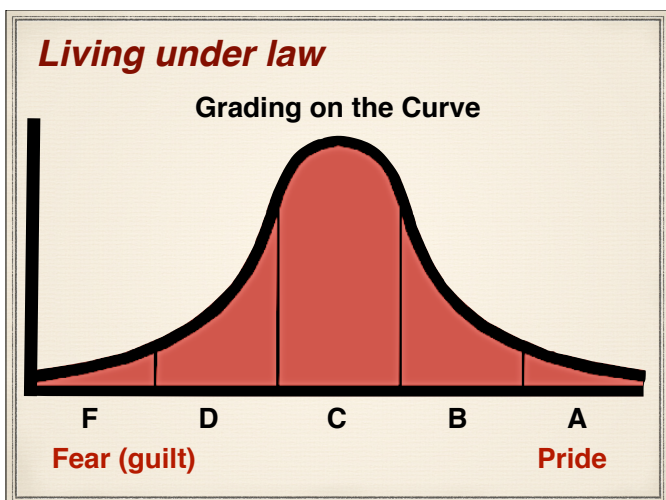
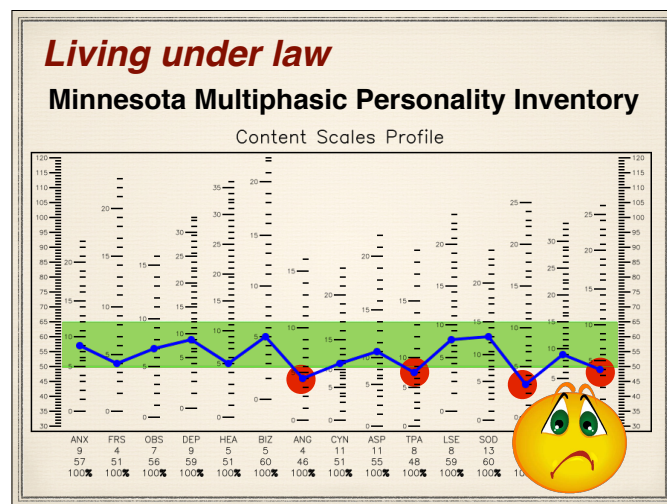
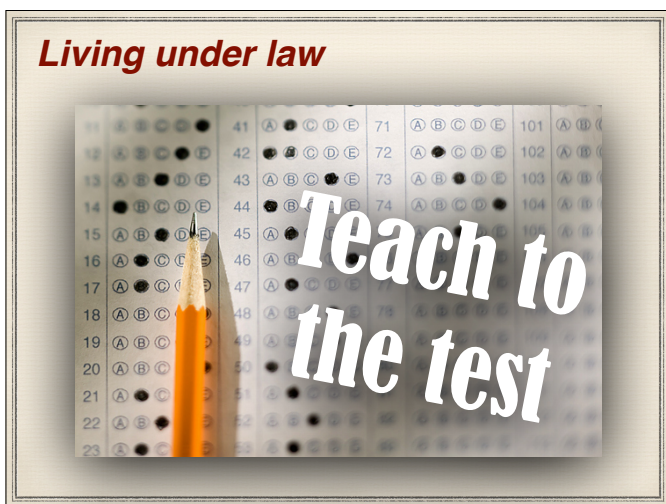
- ☒ Don't want a ticket
- ☒ Respect for the law
- ☒ It is safe & wise
- ☐ I don't
- ☐ I do whatever seems reasonable



Living under law

How do you feel when you look at a paper your teacher has corrected with red ink?

**Discouraged
Depressed
Defeated
A Failure**



- ### Suggestions for application
- STOP KEEPING SCORE.** Realize that "under the law" we will always fail via shame or pride because of our "body of sin."
There is no peace "under the law" only shame as Satan accuses the brethren.
 - FIGHT THE FIGHT OF FAITH.** Motivated by grace & love "press on" in a struggle against fear, doubt, & sin letting our past go.
Encourage others to fight the good fight of faith.
 - BE GRACIOUS.** Don't put others "under the law" by being a holy cop or embellishing our own testimony.
 - BE THANKFUL.** Remember - GRACE and FAITH before RULES and OBEDIENCE.