

# The Conflict of the Holy Spirit

by Peter Brandon

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*The sermon discusses the conflict of the Holy Spirit within a Christian, the relationship between the law and sin, and the need to rely on faith and love to overcome sin.*

**Duration:** 58:11

**Scripture:** Romans 7:1

**Topics:** "Conflict of the Spirit", "Holiness through the Spirit"

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## Description

Peter Brandon explores the ongoing conflict within believers as they are filled with the Holy Spirit, emphasizing that this struggle intensifies rather than ceases. He delves into Romans 7, illustrating the duality of being married to the law versus being married to Christ, and how the law reveals sin rather than provides salvation. Brandon highlights that true holiness comes not from adhering to the law but from living in the newness of the Spirit, relying on faith and love for Christ. He encourages believers to recognize their internal conflict as a sign of being born of God and to seek victory through Jesus Christ, who delivers us from this struggle. The sermon ultimately calls for a deeper understanding of grace and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian.

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## Transcript

Now when we are filled with the Spirit we mustn't imagine the conflict ceases, it really begins in its intensity and that is why we're going to look at Romans 7. Romans 7 reading from verse 1. Now just whilst you're finding the place, in Romans 5 we have two heads, in Romans 6 we have a two-fold form of slavery, as slavery to sin and then being enslaved to the Lord Jesus. In Romans 8 there's a two-fold form of power, the evil power of the flesh and the power of the Spirit, but in Romans 7 it's a two-fold form of matrimony, being married to the law or married to love. In Romans 6 it's the blueprint for holiness, in Romans 8 it's the power for holiness, in Romans 7 it's the workshop of holiness, the real battle, the way we get through.

So you can see that the imagery in Romans 6 is one of slavery, the imagery in Romans 8, now if we bear that in mind. In Romans 6 we die to sin, in Romans 7 we die to the law principle, that does not mean to say we depreciate the law, a Christian will never do that, but we're no longer under it, we serve the Lord Jesus, not in the oldness of the letter, but we serve him in the newness of the Spirit and if we can capture that tonight it will be a tremendous. Shall we read from that? Know ye not brethren for I speak to them that know the law, for the woman which has a husband is bound by the law to a husband so long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loose from the law of her husband.

So then if while her husband liveth she be married to another man she shall be called an adulteress, she is free from the law though she be married. Wherefore my brethren ye are become dead to the law that ye should be married to another even to him who is raised in the application of the law. The law isn't dead, but we have died to it and we have died to it through the substitutional death of the Lord Jesus.

Now let's go on verse 5 for when we were in the flesh meaning when we were in Adam the motions of sin which were by the law but now being delivered from the law that being dead wherein we were held dying to the thing that held us that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Now that is the key verse of the chapter and that is the key phrase to serve him in the newness of the spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Now may I say this in passing the law the ten commandments never save the soul and they will never sanctify a saint.

The principle of salvation is based on faith and the principle of sanctification is based on faith and therefore boasting is excluded if there's any righteousness formed in you it's going to be through the power of the spirit and as he operates through the principle of faith. So that is the analogy of the law and we're going to say that to the what shall we say then is the law sin God forbid nay I had not known sin but by the law for I had not known lust except the law had said thou shalt not covet but sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concubines that means lust for without the law sin was death for I was alive without the law once but when the commandment came sin revived and I died and the commandment which was all for sin taking occasion deceived me and bites and the commandment holy was then that which is good made death unto me God forbid but sin that it might appear sin working death in me by that which is good that sin by the commandment exceedingly.

Now those verses give us a masterly exposition of the law now notice this from verses 1 to 6 the pronouns are all in the plural from 7 to 25 the pronouns are all individual and personal in fact there are 32 I's and 12 me's there are more I's and more E's in this chapter than any other chapter in the bible but when we come to chapter 8 there are only two personal so you can see there's a tremendous truth now the pronouns from 7 to 10 pronouns but now the pronouns from 14 to the end are all present tense pronouns so we're going to look at that for we know that the law is spiritual but I am carnal soul under sin for that which I do I allow not for what I would that I do not and what I hate that do I if then I do that which I would not I consent and for I know that in me that is in my flesh

dwelleth no good thing for to will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not for the good that I would I do not but the evil which I would not that I do I find then a law that when I would do good evil is present with me for I delight in the law of God after the inward man but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord he is the secret of the victory so then with the mind I made me free of sin and death and we can all say now if you don't mind only I got so every single Christian here is in conflict every one of us even the best we've been in the presence of God with tears and we've said Lord I've done it again and perhaps if all our confessions

were really known to our brothers and sisters they would all be ashamed of us we all have a lot to cover so I want to speak about this conflict tonight because it's very important indeed now there's no such thing as an end of conflict the only time the conflict will cease is when the Lord comes or should you die and then you'll be among the spirits of just men made perfect whilst you're in this body you will have a constant conflict as though two people were living inside you one is called flesh and the other is called spirit and they're constantly in opposition I was telling the folks yesterday afternoon a number of punks have been

saved baptized and they're going on remarkably well and I spoke to one of these punks you see it meant that there was spirit and the flesh and that's a sure

sign that you've been born of God if there's a conflict now this is a vast chapter and I must say it's not an easy chapter to explain and if you read the commentators you will find there are shades of meaning and therefore I do not want now we're going to look at the exposition then we're going to have a look in the analogy he's talking about the law of the commandments meaning that sin and here's a protest God forbid and the commandment holy just and good and then look at that spiritual therefore we must never speak disparagingly of the ten commandments when you become a Christian God does not put up the ten commandments in every spiritual room taking the place of the ten commandments is the Lord Jesus and you do not say like the Jews did for me to live is the Lord's gain but you say as

a Christian for me to live is Christ and to die is gain now that's our objective but we do not despise the law of God because it's holy it's just it's good and it's spiritual but then you will notice the law of God defines sin nay I had not known now sin is not the violation of a sensitive conscience sin is the violation of the law of God and every time you break one of the ten commandments you sin and therefore God has only given to us ten commandments as you know as far as the highways of Britain are concerned there are about the seaways are concerned the airways are concerned I believe now there are five thousand laws but when God wanted to govern the conduct of our forebears in the garden of Eden he only gave us one commandment and when he wanted to govern the conduct of the world

especially the Israelites he only gave us ten now every time you break one of those commandments you sin now here is a fact the average person in the western world violates the ten commandments no less than one million times over a period of 30 years now what was Paul's besetting sin thou shalt not covet he couldn't get over that I don't think it was a matter of coveting a neighbor's wife but there was something in Paul the spring of his being where there was this problem of coveting now we've all got this yours it may be entirely different but it's there within us because eight but sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of lusts for without the law sin is death you say what does that mean the ten commandments stimulate sin you see if you put up a commandment it

will stimulate sin you say how supposing you see now a commandment keep off the grass what do you want to do step you've seen children do that I've actually seen children put their foot on the grass take for instance people who are smokers if they move into a carriage where there's no smoking they want to smoke and therefore we could go on you know quite frankly I could add and add to that I have seen children pass through but normally you'll see them because it says wet paint it stimulates the evil that's within us therefore the commandments show to us how evil we are because we've got a nature in our flesh we shall talk about that then look at verse 9 it shows us how the law revives sin for I was alive without the law once 1500 years before this so how old was the apostle Paul when he

wrote this we believe he was about 45 to 50 so what did he mean before he was saved he really believed that he had kept the law of God he was probably the only man in history apart from the Lord Jesus that could say in Philippians 3 as touching the law blameless but when he became a Christian he began to see the law through the eyes of the sermon on the mount you see in the old economy it says thou shalt not commit adultery he says if you look and laugh in your mind you have committed the act in your mind so it's the thought beyond the action the old testament says thou shalt not kill John says if you hate your brother you're a murderer so can you see when you read the 10 commandments you begin not so much to see the action but the thought that promotes the action now says the apostle

when I saw the commandments through the lens of the 10 of the sermon on the mount oh the commandments revived and I died I couldn't say as touching the law blameless then all right look at verse 10 and the commandments which was ordained to life I found if you could keep all the commandments the way but the moment you break a commandment the waitress of sin is death that doesn't mean to say that God puts the guy death always means separation his spiritual death is the separation of the sinner from God it's her now there might be someone is dead that's why we all need a savior as was the deception of sin for sin taking occasion as satan deceived the woman to violate the law of God so the flesh that's within you will deceive you it will say something like this go on keep those commandments

knowing all the time you can't keep them when you break them he laughs a deceptive thing is sin and then sometimes when you go on breaking the commandment then it's so deceptive that it will say something like this of course these 10 commandments we're beyond all that can you see how wise it is to even seriousness of sin was then verse 13 that which is good made death unto me God forbid but sin that it might appear sin working death in me by that which is good that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful now the apostle was bringing himself under the law of God experienced he now we're going to turn find then a law that's the first when I would do good evil is present in other words when he was trying to keep the finally tried to do that which is good evil was present with

him and we've all discovered that law and principle verse 20 for I delight in the law of God after the inward man now that's not a principle that's the law of a code and ethics 10 commandments that should govern the conduct of people now again you will see that Paul never speaks disparagingly of the law of God there was nothing like the libertines with the apostle Paul therefore again I do repeat we evangelicals must not speak disparagingly in our preaching we should use it in order to so there's the law of God for I delight in the law of God after the new nature his spiritual man but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind now that's another law a law that's a print the law of the commandments that should govern our conduct and the law of his mind now what was

the law in other words every single Christian who is born of the Holy Spirit's patiable desire may not be achieving it you may not you may be like the apostle Paul saying a weeping all wretched man you've never been saved the moment the Holy Spirit comes within you he incenses in your mind a strong desire for holy holiness you may be defeated you may be crying out for victory but if the law of your mind longs for holiness it's a sure sign that you have been born of God then he said speaks of another law that I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind bringing me into captivity you have within you as a Christian the flesh praise God it's already being condemned at the cross so you'll never go to hell for it it's yet to be judged in you you see we are no longer in

the flesh we're in Christ but the flesh is in us the moment we were taken out of Adam we were taken the element of that flesh is still in us experience some people call it the old nature the scripture never does if we keep to the flesh then of course we shall keep to the word now in the new testament there are five connotations to the flesh now I'm not going through the five because if I do I shall make this very complicated but all I'm going to say is this that there's a good side to the flesh and there's a bad side for instance the Lord Jesus was manifest in the flesh great is the mystery of but when he talks about flesh in the eighth chapter it's always the bad sense of flesh now the flesh is the seat of all sin the flesh is the throne room of all sin the flesh is the powerhouse of all

sin and if you could actually take out your flesh life and all of us none of us know the evil potential you see our sins that means our behavior patterns may differ but our flesh life is all the same and therefore none of

us can boast it's been judged at the cross through our Lord Jesus it's yet to be judged in us and therefore that he's now on the floor some of you may say against the and then he says I thank God through Jesus Christ and then he throws us back to Romans 7 but then someone might ask why do we have to go through this great conflict now you will notice in scripture God he tested Adam by putting two trees in the garden the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life again he was testing Abraham and God leaves the flesh to see whether we will obey the dictates

of the flesh now this conflict goes on first of all the conflict between in order to expose in us so that we learn by experience that there is an evil side to our nature secondly the conflict goes on in order to reveal to us our total inability to improve the flesh we may study the Bible and may I say that this that is a wonderful exercise but it will never improve the flesh we might spend hours and hours in prayer just like Martin Luther we might pass our body through the most protracting spiritual it will never never in sometimes you will hear teachers saying we've got to feed the spirit you see the script so you can see no matter how much we try we shall never improve our flesh nature some people try to improve it by putting over it beautiful moral garments some people try and improve

it by education and they give it a cap and gown but it's still the flesh would you believe it some people try and improve it by glamorizing it and they still glamorize flesh there's nothing that we can do that will improve the flesh it is totally and absolutely different thirdly the contact conflict goes on in order to show to us and reveal to us in a very practical way we work on it to try and change it the law way that we can and then we look at it and we say something like this you see beloved if you make excuses for your besetting sins you will never get victory over them if you say like someone I know you will find this that Paul hated every vision that he had of the flesh in him let me give you an illustration I was uh in Hamilton having a mission it seemed as though my work and

would you believe it on a night like that well we were dealing with souls at 11 o'clock and he saw something on where he said after you pointed me to Christ desire to swear I even had a desire to drink in fact I lost my temper and used a bad word on the child you didn't I did and then he wept and he says I can't be saved now tell me John do you hate your sins do you hate the living sight screwed his fist in the tight and he hit his other hand until he almost raptured it raptured it well he did actually nearly lost it there's the old and the new before you were saved you didn't hate the living so that you cry out oh wretched man that I am and then this who shall deliver me I don't want to go on losing my temper I don't want to go on lusting I want to live a victorious life who's going to

deliver me now dear friends are you there do you feel inwardly battered do you feel beaten do you hate your flesh now God is going to give you victory now let's look at this analogy or a better word and frankly it looks and uh not too happy I believe in the marriage and then suddenly he dies and she's free to marry another man then he turns round the particular illustration it's not so much the husband that dies but we have died now in Romans 6 we have died to the Finn family that's the Adam family now what governed we have died to the principle of sinning and we have died to the law where holiness therefore if we are going to get holiness we shall never get it the law way we shall get it the new way now what's that we shall get holiness as we rely we shall get holiness as we implicitly

trust the law to work in us and just as we trusted the law to save us forgive me getting excited over this we must trust the law to make us holy the just shall live by faith Paul says I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the son of God who loved me and trusts in the Lord and thirdly it's the life of love the Lord does not speak to us in

a dictatorial way like the ten commandments shouting out the orders thou shalt thou shalt the whole principle of the new testament is this if you love me keep my commandments in other words you do everything out of a pure love for the Lord Jesus and that basically is the newness of the spirit it's the spirit's way it's faith's way it's love's way now what I've

done is to invent a story on certain points I must tell you I'm a little off the mark but I am going to storify now that analogy and first of all I want you to imagine a girl by the name of Ruth Love and she's beautiful she's lovely but inwardly there's a corruption in her that she's unaware of her father is a man called love of God and he has never really been honest with her he has never really revealed his identity but she is a girl that has been reared by her father and therefore she is absolutely faithful to him one day she meets a man by the name of Virgil and there are four things that mark him his holy his just his good and furthermore his spiritual and as they meet he falls in love with Ruth Love and she falls in love with him and eventually they get married you've never seen a

wedding like it but when she made the vows she did all that my Lord says I will do and she thought she could keep his ten commandments and she was taken into a beautiful home and in that mansion there was a place for a father she seemed to break and one day her father came to her and said what's he chuckling like and he said something like this I love all the stuff or I dearer on the more commandments she and she didn't realize how deceptive he was one day Mr.

Law didn't come home and the news came that he died and Ruth said to her father father I shall never marry again I broke the heart of Josiah Law one thing this marriage has done it's shown to me that within me there's an evil nature it shows to me that I'm exceedingly wicked and somehow I'm never never going to marry again and she was a heartbroken one about two years later when she was turned out of the home and his name was Joshua Love and when she looked at him she said this he's just like my husband what's your name your name is Ruth Love how did you know tell you something more your father's name is not Love it's Sucks sucks yes sucks and I'll tell you something more your great great great grandfather was a gardener and he was turned out because he's and I'll tell you this Ruth you

come from a bad bad stock I'll tell you something more you made a mess of that house of Moses didn't you you broke every commandment you broke his heart you've made a mess of things and you realize you're under judgment and when she heard that she nearly walked away which how do you know all that you must hate me Ruthie says I love you you're joking I love you you know all about my failures you know all about my sins you know all about my background you've told me something and you say you love me yes and here's my proof he showed her his wounded hair he pulled aside his suiting and she saw a cross and on that cross was and there he was bearing the judgment for all her sins and bearing the judgment for all the socks the flesh that was and it was like a revelation Ruthie says I want to

marry you oh I can't I shall never marry again I'm sorry it's wonderful to know that you love me but you see I couldn't keep it up Ruth through my death there'll be complete cleansing past present then Ruth something wonderful will happen I shall bring you into a house called the house Christos and in that house there'd be a beautiful room called new man and that room is going to be filled with the glory of the host and you will not only have a clean life you'll have the power to live that's wonderful but I couldn't keep those commandments you see if you put out all those commandments even with that power there'd be no commandments no commandments nothing in every room it will be this for me to live and you won't serve me legally by commands you'll do everything out of love and you'll

depend on me for everything your very life I'll be your actual life and that's how we get married but what are the vows shall I tell you I want you to say this just as I am without one plea but that thy blood was shed and with tears because of failure she just says this you're mine forever nothing will separate us not even death because you see I can never die oh yeah now I'm going to introduce you to the house but see your father his sarcs his evil his wretchedness and I'm going to put him in sarcs room constantly keep the numerum open and you'll be all right and she moves into the house of I'm leaving you forever I'm cleaving to my husband for me and for six months the marriage is wonderful no laws no harsh commands no do this do that when he leaves he just says don't forget trust and

obey depend upon me and she's able to do things man now may I say this he will never die but she wouldn't hearken and she was just obeying all the loving overtures that oh he said the way you keep it mr. law well you see father I'm him in the oldness of the letter I'm faith's way it's new my way the spirit and there he that night mr. love the dinner's not burning dear oh dear I can smell you've let your that's right only for 10 minutes she kept on letting him out and then he spilled his bean ruth you've lost your independence ruth lost your personality you're no longer my girl you've lost all connections with me why don't you put some of those commandments up and show him your moral muscles show him what you can do go back to the old letter and would you believe it after a year of heaven

on earth she pins up the game and she keeps on breaking them and the house gets in a mess what the house crystals yes and somehow she seems to break them more than when she was under mr. love and she discovers there's a terrible one day she looked in the numerum and she seemed to see a form of a man's weeping bit like a bereaved man oh dear she says I'm grieving the numerum what am I doing and when her husband came home she could see he was bit dear throw me out and then she blurts out oh wretched woman that I am who's going to deliver me he says right sit down who told you to put all these canals I thought that pleased you you're trying to achieve holiness the look you know that you've already failed now look don't serve me in the oldness of the left serve me in the newness of the spirit

it's faith's way it's the spirit's way and where's sucks right chain him in the room do it now and then her husband was transfigured his face did shine as the sun oh dear she says you're all together lovely says dear I can't share with you don't serve him

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