



Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

October 7/8 2017 – Greg Harris
The Clip Show - (Romans 7:1-6)

[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]

Starting around the 1930s or so, the TV industry, television producers, they started employing a strategy called “the clip shows.” So, the clip show was the part of the TV series where it was summarizing everything that had happened on the TV series up to that point. One of the reasons why they did this was because there was no PVR, there was no Netflix, there was no real way to track... there were no DVDs you can buy afterwards to watch the series at home, and so if you were just coming new into a television series, you would kind of need these clip shows every once in a while in order to kind of get caught up. So one of the shows that first employed this strategy was *Robinson Crusoe*, and as the years went on other shows started doing it. By the time we got to the ‘90s and early 2000s, shows were still doing it, probably mostly just to save money, because they don’t actually have to pay the actors to show up that day to work, they can just throw a bunch of clips up and it’s easy. But then by the time the show like *The Office* came around, fans weren’t as happy with the clip show because they already had YouTube, they had a bunch of other ways, they could buy the DVDs, they didn’t need the clip show anymore because they could just watch whatever episode they wanted whenever they wanted. But that idea of needing the clip show to make sure that we knew what was coming or what we just went through is helpful for us when we think about books of the Bible, in particular the book of Romans, which we’re studying right now.

See, the book of Romans, we take our time studying the book of Romans as churches and in our church. Last fall we did the first few chapters, this fall we’re going through a few more chapters. We take our sweet time working through books of the Bible. In the original context, they would receive the letter, it would have been read to them in one sitting, and then they might not have heard it read to them again for a really long time. So every once in a while you’ll have the apostle Paul putting in things like the passage we have here this morning, in Romans chapter 7 where we have Paul basically summarizing what he just finished talking about in Romans 6. So, if you’ve been with us these last few weeks, some of this is going to sound like review. But if you haven’t been with us the past few weeks, then welcome to the clip show [laughter].

So, we’re going to look at Romans chapter 7, and in this chapter, the first few verses actually in Romans chapter 7, we’re going to learn three characteristics of Christians. We’re going to see that Christians have died to the law, they belong to Jesus, and they bear fruit for God. So the three characteristics of Christians is they’ve died to the law, they belong to Jesus, and they bear fruit for God.



[Christians Have Died to the Law]

So first, let's look at how Christians have died to the law. Romans 7, if you have your Bible, open it to that chapter, if not it'll be on your screen in front of you. Romans 7:

“Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.”

There's lots that we could talk about in this passage but one of the first things I want us to focus in on is Paul's big point, one of his big points here, he's making it clear that Christians have died to the law. Verse 1 made this clear, he said:

“Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives?”

And then in verse 4 he says:

“So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ.”

So, I just finished talking about how this passage is like a summary of Romans 6, right? Well, if you were here the last few weeks, you might remember that Paul—this actually, this language of dying to the law sounds a little bit new, because what he said in Romans 6:2, is that we are those who have died to sin. Okay, so how do we make sense of that? Is dying to the law the same as dying to sin? That kind of sounds like the law is sin, right? So that's the question that gets asked in Romans 7:7: “Are you saying that because we've died to sin and died to the law, are you saying that the law is *sin*?” And Paul says, “By no means.” And then he goes on to explain how that all works out, but that's for next week. Okay? That's the cliff-hanger for the next episode. This is the clip show, okay? So we'll get to how that all works out in weeks to come, but for us this morning it's enough meat for us to think about the fact that Christians have died to the law. We've been dead to sin and we're dead to the law, and the reason that we're dead to sin and we're dead to the law is because verse 4 tells us that,

“... my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ.”

So in other words, because of Jesus' life and his death, now, if we are in Christ, we are dead to sin and we are dead to the law. So, one quick way to kind of help us get our bearings on what that means is... Paul's not saying that the law *is* sin, or that the law *makes us* sin, but rather, when we see the law, like, “Do not lie,” it reminds us that we *are* liars. And we sit and we read that and we hear it, and we think to ourselves, “But I am a liar,” and we realize all the times we do lie, and we notice all the ways



that we can't stop lying. The law didn't make us do it, it just aroused it in us. We just noticed it more clearly because the law told us. The law is good, and because the law is good, it shows us where we're bad, where we sin. But because of the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus, we are dead to sin, and we're dead to the law, through Christ's life.

So, two helpful theological frameworks for us, that we could spend a whole sermon series on, but we're not going to, I'm going to try to do it in a minute, okay? So Christ's life and His death are necessary for our salvation, especially according to the law. So, through Christ's life the requirements of the law have been met. This is called, in theological circles, Christ's active obedience. It's because Jesus perfectly fulfilled the law, that no longer the law's requirements are over His people, because He already perfectly did it. There's nothing that could be done that He did not do. He was perfect in His active obedience to the law. So Christ's perfection is necessary for our salvation.

But so, too, is Christ freeing us from the consequences of the law. The consequences of the law are our punishment and death, and Christ, on the Cross, bore our sin and our shame. He died for our sins in our place, he took the consequences of the law. See, through the life and the death of Jesus Christ, if we're in Him, we, too, have died to the law. He's taken care of the law's consequences and He's taken care of the law's requirements. So I want us to think about that a little bit together, some of the implications of that, that because we are dead to the law, now we are released from the consequences of the law.

So, I don't know if you've noticed this, but every advertisement that gets put in front of your eyes, if you're driving down the freeway and they're on the billboards on the side, or if you're on YouTube and the ad comes on, and you're trying to do the auto-skip thing, you have to wait 8 seconds, every advertisement that comes across to you is only interesting to you if you know that you need the thing. Right? So for example, like when I was living at home as a teenager, I cared very little about cleaning advertisements, because I didn't have to do that. So I was like "I don't know, Mr. Clean, OxiClean, it's all good. Just pick one of the cleans, I'm sure it'll work. No big problem, let's just skip through that commercial." Or before I had kids, I didn't realize that different diapers are different qualities. And so, you'd see the commercials, and you'd think to yourself, "Ah, I can't believe Huggies is that much better than Pampers," or whatever, and then once you have a kid and he's getting wet all the time, and everything's getting wet that you own because he's –the diapers are no good, you're rewinding the commercials, thinking, "I wonder if Pampers is actually better. Let me watch that commercial again, that seems really convincing. He's wearing a lab coat, that's great" [laughter]. See, our attention and our thankfulness for something that's being offered to us is entirely dependent on if we actually have a *need* for it, or if we perceive that we have a need for it.

See, here're the thing, for a lot of us, when we start talking about the law and the consequences of the law, we don't really think there's that big of a need for it in our own lives. It's like we're being sold a product we don't actually feel a need for. You can be released from the consequence of the law, and you think, "Okay, but I'm not actually that bad, right? Like, I'm no Mother Teresa, but I'm no Hitler." It's always those two, that's the spectrum, right? [laughter]. So because I'm no Hitler, there's not actually that much for me to be released from the consequence of the law, it's not actually that big of a deal. But we need to remember that if you are sitting and you are hearing Paul's letter being read to you the first time, that Romans chapters 1 through 3, would have been making a cumulative case, and would have been bombarding you with one big idea. And that one big idea is that you are in deep, deep trouble. You are a sinner before a holy God and you are in *deep* trouble before Him. Because you can't



do the things you're supposed to do to have this relationship, this perfect, unhindered relationship with the holy God, you can't do it. And so all you have before you now is judgement and wrath, and if you're hearing Paul rightly in chapters 1 through 3, what you should be thinking to yourself is, "I am being oppressed and weighted down, and I am drowning in God's holy justice towards my sinfulness."

This past summer we were at a lake, at Cultus Lake at a friend's place, and I tried paddle boarding for the first time, and I didn't fall off, I was very proud of myself. But then I stopped while I was ahead because I didn't want to embarrass myself and someone would catch it on YouTube and it would be a whole thing, right? So, I go back to the shore, I'm sitting on the paddle board now in the shallow end and I have my son on the paddle board with me, he's sitting there and splashing and I'm watching him, and my friend comes along and we're chatting and it's a great time, beautiful day. All of a sudden my son falls into the water, and he's out of my reach. My friend quickly, within, like, I don't know, a second, not even, scoops up my son, puts him back on the paddle board. My heart's racing, I think I'm the worst father in the world (because I probably was in that second), and my son comes out of the water, he's on the paddle board, and he's, like, fine. Not really shaken, not really –he's just fine, he's probably thinking, "I didn't know there was a slide on this paddle board, but there is, so that was fun" [laughter]. See, he had no idea of the consequences that were awaiting him if someone didn't scoop him up out of the water.

So when you compare that image, my son's ambivalence towards his rescue, with the image, I don't know if you've seen the movie *Wonder Woman*? But near the beginning of the film, there's a pilot named Steve Trevor, it's in World War I, it's set at that time frame, and he's driving this plane, and the plane crashes into the ocean, and he's stuck inside this plane (it's one of those open airplanes), and so he's trying to get himself out of the seatbelt but the seatbelt is all stuck, and the plane is dragging him deeper and deeper into the ocean, and the bright blue skies that he just came out of, that he can see as he starts going into the water, it's getting darker and darker as it's being clouded by, and covered by, the ocean. And his eyes start to roll into the back of his head as the pressure under the water starts overcoming him. And Diana, Wonder Woman, sees this plane crash into the ocean, and she jumps off a cliff, dives right in, swims down deep, the pilot is basically unconscious at this point, she drags him out of the plane, swims up with him, puts him on dry ground. He makes it, and he is now indebted to this woman for the rest of his life, thinking, "I can't believe you rescued me."

See, your ability to feel the joy of being released from the consequences of the law is directly related to if you think that you are worthy, or that your state before a holy God, if it's just being scooped out after one second, or if it's being drowned under the depths of the ocean with the light of the sky fading away. If you think that your sin is no big deal and all you needed was a little scoop up, then you're going to think, "Ah, released from the consequences of the law, no big deal." But if you realize that because of our sin before a holy God we are plummeting down to the depths of the ocean with no hope other than his intervention, that when you hear that through the death of Christ we're released from the consequences of the law, you think, "That's actually pretty good news."

But I think most of us, we... we think we're pretty good. We just need that quick scoop up. It's not actually that big of a deal. The real problem with the world, we think to ourselves, is all of the *thems*. The *them* is the problem. It's *their* sexual ethics, I can't believe they live that way. It's *their* impatience towards their kids, do you see the way they treat them? It's *their* language, it's the way *they* do business. All the world's problems are because there's a whole lot of *thems*. But if we are reading Romans 1-3 correctly and we're hearing Paul's argument well, what he's saying is, "Actually, the



problem with the world is there's a whole lot of you's and me's." That's the problem with the world. That's why things are broken the way they are, is because *we* have a messed up view of sex. It's because *we* don't treat people fair in business, it's because *we* are impatient with people. See, my son has decided over the past few weeks, months it feels like, years maybe even, that between 2:00am and 4:00am is like, the best time to be awake. Everyday. He's not sad, he's just like, "Hey! It's 2:00! Let's hang out." See, when your –when this is your routine over a long time, and you're trying to put your son back to sleep, you realize that --there's a Bible verse that says that out of the mouth the heart speaks. At 2:00am after a few weeks, you realize that the things that are coming out of your mouth show the darkness of the heart [laughter]. It chips away at your patience, right? Those kinds of things? You start becoming short, impatient, and maybe you don't even say it out loud, but it just gets stuck in your throat. But you're still thinking it. All kinds of adjectives are being thrown out that shouldn't be thrown out. See, the problem with the world is that there is a lot of me's. If you realize that the problem with the world is our sin, not just the hurt that it causes but the judgement that we deserve because of it, then when you hear the news that someone is going to release you from the consequences of the law, you're going to think to yourself, "That's some really good news." Because as Christians we've died to the law and to its consequences.

Another implication of us dying to the law, though, is that we have died to the requirements of the law. So what this means is we've been released from the need to do good law keeping things in order to be a better Christian. Okay? So the good news of the gospel is that Jesus Christ, through His life and death and resurrection, jumped into the ocean to drag you out of the plane that you were drowning in. Dragged you up out of the water, carried you to dry ground, and gave you new life. But some people now will attach to that and say, "Okay, so once that's all happened, now I'm going to show just how valuable and how much I love God because of my ability to keep the law. So I'm saved by grace but now I've still go to keep all the requirements of the law. This was a problem for the early church. If you read the book of Acts, as the gospel's going forward out of Jerusalem to the end of the earth, what's going on is you have people who aren't just Jewish, but they're also non-Jewish people, hearing this gospel, wanting to be a part of this people of God that started through the Jewish people. Jesus was a Jew and his ministry is the fulfillment of the Jewish faith and heritage. And you have these non-Jews hearing this news about this salvation and this being saved by grace for an eternal hope, and they're like, "I want in," and the Jews have a question: "Do they have to follow the law? Do they have to be circumcised now? Because they're non-Jews and they're going to be a part of our people. Do they have to do the things that show that they're a distinct people, that we've always done, do they have to do them?" Well, the church gets together in Acts 15 and they have a conversation about this, and they come to the conclusion that, no, actually, because of what the gospel means, we've been –we're dead to the law, we're released from its requirements, it's no longer required for people to do the law keeping things that distinguished them and differentiated them from the rest of the world. You don't have to have circumcision and still be a part of the people of God, they decided.

Later, Paul writes to a church in Galatia who was getting this very point all kinds of wrong. Because they were saying, "Sure, sure, you're a Christian because of what Jesus did, He dragged you out of the water, that's all great, *but* you've also got to do the circumcision. You've got to do the things that differentiate us from the rest of the world. You have to be set apart still, in the way that you live. And so you have to *do*, you have to keep the requirements of the law." And Paul hears this news of what's going on in this church and he writes them and says, "This is a different gospel." The gospel is that *Jesus* kept the requirements of the law and now gives us His perfection. So for us to now say, "Thanks



for the gospel, Jesus, now let me do a really good job keeping the law,” is for us to say, “I don’t *need* your law keeping, Jesus.” See, this pops up all kinds of places, all kinds in church history where you have people who are Christians who say, “Look, I am saved by grace, but now in order to set myself apart as a deeper, more well-rounded Christian, I want to observe parts of the law. I’m not talking about the Ten Commandments, I’m talking about stuff like food laws. I’m going to not eat pork, because Israel was called not to eat pork so now I’m not going to eat pork because that’s going to make me a better Christian than other people. It’s going to set me apart from the rest of Christians.” There’s a church in the States whose website says this, they’re a Torah observant Christian church, and their website says this:

“Perhaps you’ve felt a yearning for something more within your church-based faith. But every time you attempt to find this “more,” you’re hit with a brick wall. This is exactly what we went through, sitting in church, wondering, “Is this really it?” There has to be something more. Well, our fellowship is a result of that yearning. We have a passion for seeking a deeper truth. It is of grace from God Himself that we’ve obtained salvation, and through salvation we now submit ourselves to God’s Torah in order to live a set apart, holy life.”

What they’re saying is, “We’re saved by the gospel. But to not try to keep the laws of the Torah, to not try to keep the food laws and the festival laws and that kind of stuff, like, sure, we don’t need to, but man, if you do it, it’s a deeper, richer kind of thing. It’s a better kind of thing.” Paul says to those kinds of people, “That’s a different gospel.” If you are doing the law in order to show just how special you are as a follower of Jesus, you have not understood the gospel of Jesus Christ. Gospel plus keeping the law isn’t a *deeper* faith, it’s a *different* one. If we are dead to the law, that means we are released from the requirements of the law. Jesus was the perfect law keeper and it’s *his* record that we receive through faith. Because we’re dead to the law we’re free, we’re released from its requirements, and also from its consequences.

[We Belong to Jesus]

The second characteristic of Christians from this passage, and I promise these next two are a lot quicker, okay? Second characteristics from Romans 7 is that we belong to Jesus. Romans 7:1:

“Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.”

Paul is saying that because we’ve been released from the law, we now belong to Jesus. The image, the illustration that he uses, is of marriage. And it makes sense. What he’s saying is, “Look, marriage lasts until one of the spouses dies, and then once one of the spouses dies, the other spouse is released from what bound them to that marriage. Now they’re free, they’re released and they’re free to



go and belong to another one.” What Paul’s saying here is that we’re bound to the law and to sin. But because we’ve been released from that, now we can belong to Jesus. See, one of the great parts of being involved in weddings is hearing the vows of the couple and hearing them say, “Till death do us part.” Next week I have the opportunity to officiate a wedding of two of my friends from high school, and I saw their vows, and in their vows is this language of “till death do us part.” Right, because that’s how long we’re bound to someone. So here’s how it works for us. Jesus has released us from sin and the law by his death. So now because of his death we are freed from being bound to the law, and because he’s resurrected from the dead he can die no more. So here’s what I want you picture: the one that we belong to is now an eternal belonging, because we’re attached to him for as long as he lives. The good news is that he conquered death. So we *were* bound to the law and to sin, now we are bound and belong to Jesus, till death do us part. But death can’t part us.

In John chapter 14, Jesus says these words to his disciples, He says,

“My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

That scene of Jesus going to his Father’s house to prepare a place where he will live with his disciples, that language was ancient world language for what a groom would say to his bride before they were married. He’d say, “Look, I am going to go to my dad’s place and prepare the place that we’re going to live.” In the current context we say, “How about everyone gets poor living by themselves.” In the ancient context they said, “How about we live with our family. So I’m going to go, I know we’re going to get married, but before we get married I’m going to go to my father’s house, I’m going to prepare a place for us, and that’s where we’re going to be. And I’m going to come back and get you and bring you to the place that I’m preparing to dwell with you.” Jesus is saying, “Look, you are going to belong with me.” Jesus says to His Church, the gathered body of those who are saved by grace through faith, and He says, “I’m going to come back and bring you home and we’re going to belong until death do us part. The good news is death can’t part us.” See, because we’ve died to the law we are now *freed* to belong to another. And the One that we belong to, we’ll belong with forever because death can’t part us. The best part of this news is that this isn’t dependent on our ability to do good things for God. The best part of this news is that this is entirely dependent on the fact that Jesus jumped into the ocean to drag us out from our drowning. He loved us what with *The Jesus Storybook Bible* describes as “a wonderful, never stopping, never giving up, unbreaking, always and forever love.” It’s exactly right. We’re the kind of people who turn our back on him time and time again. We don’t want him, we are plummeting down into the depths of the ocean, but Jesus has this never-stopping, unbreaking, always and forever type love, this aggressive, proactive, “I’m going to get what belongs to me” kind of love and he grabs us and he pulls us to a new land and he says, “You belong with me forever now.”

In the Old Testament, God told one of his prophets named Hosea, he said, “Look, your whole life is going to be an illustration for the people of Israel. Here’s what I want you to do. I want you to marry this lady named Gomer, and she is going to cheat on you *all* the time. She’s *always* going to be with other men but I need you to *always* pursue her and always bring her back to you because that’s going to be a picture of my proactive, aggressive, always unchanging, unbreakable, never giving up, always and forever love. It’s going to be that kind of love that I want you to demonstrate as an example.” So Hosea does this, he marries Gomer, and Gomer does cheat on him time and time again. She is never faithful to him and yet Hosea is steadfast and unbreaking in his pursuit of her. Look, here’s the good



news, you and I are a whole bunch of Gomers. And Jesus is the best Hosea ever who comes and pursues and saves. That's why we belong to him. It isn't because of our ability to live a good life, it's because he decided to jump into the ocean to drag us out, put us on new land and say, "I'm going to go make a place for us to live and I'll be back to get you." We've been released from the law, and now we belong to Jesus.

[We Bear Fruit for God]

Third characteristic of Christians from Romans 7 is we bear fruit for God. Romans 7:4 says,

"So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God."

See, now that we belong to Jesus, we're going to actually live like we belong to him. So when I was talking about how we're freed, we're released from the requirements of the law, you might have been sitting there thinking, "Okay, but what about all the places in the Bible where, we are still supposed to *do*, right, and to live like. There's still laws to follow, right?" Well, it's a different paradigm for us. It's not so much that we have new laws to follow as though we weren't saved by grace and now we have to follow these laws, it's more like we've been saved by grace and now the Spirit dwells in us and this is what it looks like.

The image of bearing fruit is a really great image. See, when we were bound to sin and death, the fruit that we bore was destruction and death. But now that we belong to Jesus, the kind of fruit we bear is the kind of stuff that the New Testament talks about, like how Christians are the kinds of people who are supposed to bear one another's burdens, and encourage one another and build each other up. See, when people come to Jesus and they say, "I need the law. I need you to tell me exactly what to do now that I want to follow you," and he says, "Okay, here's all of the law summed up: love God, love others." And people want more, they're saying, "Give me more, give me exactly what I have to do so that I know that I've done it." And he says, "No, no, it doesn't work that way. Love God, love others. Have this mindset as you go through life, that I want to serve God and I want to serve others." Well, what's that going to look like? Well, it's going to look like encouraging others and building others up, but it's going to call for all kinds of different actions in different situations, because the point isn't for us as believers, "What's the law and how do I have to keep it?" The point as believers is to grasp to the gospel and live in light of the gospel, and the fruit that will come from our life is fruit that's going to look like loving God and loving others. See, trees don't try to keep laws. Trees just bear fruit. What Paul is saying is that if you have been dead to sin in the law and you belong to Jesus, you will bear fruit for God. It's going to happen in your life. It's not about keeping the laws, it's about allowing the fruit to be bore through your life.

Here's another image. You've left the family of sin and death, and you've joined the family of Christ. When you change families, sometimes your traditions change, right? You used to do all *these* kinds of things as a kid but now in your new family situation you do *these* types of things. So there is a TV show called *This is Us*, they have a Thanksgiving episode that I think illustrates this really well. The family, the Pearson family, their family tradition was to go on Thanksgiving to Grandma's house, right? One daughter would bring the cranberry sauce, another daughter would bring the sweet potato pie. They drive the four hours, go to Grandma's and that's what Thanksgiving was all about. Well, one



Thanksgiving the car breaks down before they can get to Grandma's house. So they have to hike three miles to a hotel where there is no food, there's only hot dogs that are cold and frozen, and processed cheese, and that's their dinner. And they don't really have anything else to do they just have a ball of yarn, and so they play a game called The Ball of Yarn of Thankfulness, right, and they pull on the yarn and they say what they're thankful for. And now this hiking for three miles, and this pulling on the ball yarn and saying what you're thankful for, and eating hot dogs and cheese, that's their new Thanksgiving tradition moving forward. Because when the family dynamics change sometimes traditions change. They didn't have this as a law to keep, it's just what happened for them around Thanksgiving. They pulled out the ball of yarn and said what they were thankful for, they ate the cold hot dogs and processed cheese, they went for a three mile hike. See, when you change families, your traditions will change.

This passage is telling us you have left the family of sin and the law. You used to do those family traditions. Now you belong to the family of Christ and you're going to have a new set of things that as a family of Christ you just do. Things like encouraging one another and building each other up. Things like bearing one another's burdens. You love one another. And people will actually know that we belong to the family of Christ, because of our love for one another. It's just what we do. We're dead to the law, we belong to Jesus, and we bear fruit for God. That's what characterizes Christians. Let me pray for us,

Father, I'm thankful for your Word. I'm thankful for this passage, I'm thankful for the way that it serves as a summary of what's come before and it's a hinge for what's about to come. And as we look forward to the rest of the book of Romans, studying together, Father, I pray that you would help us grasp these truths, that our identity is in the fact that we've been released from the law and we belong to Jesus. And Father, I do pray that you would help our church be the kind of church that would just look like your family. That we would bear the kind of fruit that looks like the tree that's rooted deeply in you. We pray this ultimately for your glory and for our good, and we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.