

Rom 14:5-6: Paul's instruction here clearly shows that the Mosaic Law is not binding on believers, for if it was, Sabbath observance would not be optional. Paul also uses the example of the food that one eats; this was tightly governed by the Mosaic Law but it no longer applies to those not under the Mosaic Law. In the cases of laws outside of the eternal moral law of God, the believer has freedom and is judged on the basis of conscience. One might sin by not keeping the Sabbath *if* his conscience condemns him. Thus the believer must live according to his conscience in a way that glorifies God and reflects the fact that we belong to him.

Rom 14:14: Paul is convinced that no food is unclean. This clearly indicates that the Mosaic Law is outside the eternal moral will of God. Some may think that they need to eat a certain way and they will be judged if they do not act in the way they believe is required. Later they may mature and recognize that they are not under such restriction. (This was particularly an issue for Jews who grew up in obedience to the Mosaic Covenant and had great difficulty in separating God's eternal will from the Mosaic Law.) Furthermore, if another might be harmed by what I do (or eat), then for the love of my brother, I am bound to act accordingly. I am restricted in what I can do by virtue of love for another. The point is not that as one not under the law I can act however I please without regard for others, but that I have a new master and I act according to his desires.

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

While we are not under law (the Mosaic Law), we certainly are under teaching. Scripture (the NT) clearly commands us to do certain things and we cannot claim to be free from those instructions. But we are not under them in the sense that we must do them in order to gain righteousness. We do them because we have already been made righteous and thus are walking in conformity with the righteousness secured for us.

## THE LAW IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

### ROMANS 1-3

All people are guilty before God. The Jews are guilty because they do not obey the commands of the Mosaic Law (Rom 2:17-24). The Gentiles are guilty because they do not obey God's law that is written on their hearts (Rom 2:12-15).

Rom 3:19-20: Because man is sinful, he cannot keep the Mosaic Law to be declared righteous. What the Mosaic Law does is reveal the sinfulness of man. By revealing man's need for another righteousness, the Law leads people to Christ. The only way to be declared righteous is by receiving Christ's atoning sacrifice by faith.

### ROMANS 5-6

Rom 5:12-21: Sin existed before the Mosaic Law was given and before Moses everyone who sinned died. The Law was given so that sin would increase, thereby pointing man to their need for a Savior.

Rom 6:1-14: Believers have died to sin and now live for God. This entails a death to the Mosaic Law, for the Mosaic Law was an administration to reveal sin. To live under the Mosaic Law is to deny one's new life in Christ and to revert to a pre-conversion existence.

Rom 6:15-23: Believers now live not under the Mosaic Law but under an administration of grace. Those who live under the Mosaic Law are slaves to sin; those who have been justified by faith in Christ are slaves to righteousness. The believer has exchanged masters: he has traded Mosaic Law (which produces sin) for God (who gives life).

### ROMANS 7-8

Rom 7:1-4: The Mosaic Law does not have authority over believers because believers have died to it. Just as marriage is binding only until death, so the Mosaic Law is no longer binding after a person has died to the flesh.

Rom 7:5: The Mosaic Law arouses sinful passions.

Rom 7:7: The Mosaic Law is holy, righteous, and good. The problem is that man's flesh is sinful and therefore Mosaic Law + flesh=sin. When the holy Mosaic Law confronts sinful flesh, man's desires for sin increase. Thus the Mosaic Law exposes man's sin and its consequent death.

Rom 7:23; 8:2: The word "law" here means "principle."

Rom 8:3: This verse summarizes the point of chapter 7: The Mosaic Law is powerless because it is weakened by the flesh. Thus the Mosaic Law could not provide life, so Jesus died as an offering for sin so that the demands of the Law would be fulfilled in us. Since those demands of righteousness were satisfied by Jesus, we are no longer subject to the requirements of the Mosaic Law.

Rom 8:7: God's law here speaks of God's will and is not restricted to the Mosaic Law. The point is that the sinful mind cannot do what God desires.

## **ROMANS 9-11**

Rom 9:4: "The receiving of the law": this is clearly the Mosaic Law.

Rom 9:31: Deciding the meaning of law in this verse is debated. It may refer to the Mosaic Law which promised righteousness or the emphasis may be upon righteousness itself, making "law" here a synonym for principle. In either case, righteousness comes only through faith in Jesus; for that reason the Gentiles obtained it but the Jews did not.

Rom 10:4: This is a summary verse for the previous paragraph. That "Christ is the end of the law" means that Christ is the purpose of the law: the law leads to Christ and those who follow the Mosaic Law (which reveals man's guilt and need of a savior) will come to Christ who provides that righteousness. Righteousness cannot be achieved through the law alone because the flesh is incapable of

obeying it. But righteousness can be obtained through Christ who fulfilled the Mosaic Law.

Christ is also the end of the law in that there is no purpose of the Mosaic Law beyond Christ. Since Christ fulfills it and provides all that it ever could (and more), there is no abiding function of the Mosaic Law. Christ completes it. All should now come to Christ instead of the Mosaic Law. By being in Christ, with a new life in Christ, one fulfills God's moral demands (law). Our status is now "in Christ" (or with the Spirit of Christ in us; 8:9-10) and not "under the law."

This does not mean we can live free from God's moral character (law), for by virtue of being "in Christ" we are living in conformity with God's will (law). If we disobey God, we are not abiding in Christ. If by saying we are not under the law we mean that we are our own law, we are gravely mistaken. Instead we are in Christ, subject to God, and slaves to righteousness. By virtue of being in Christ, saved by his blood, given a new heart, it is only natural (it is our nature) to walk in conformity with God's character (law). The claim that since that we are freed from the Mosaic Law we can now sin it up is a complete misunderstanding of our salvation. That claim comes from an outsider who doesn't know grace, who doesn't appreciate the cost of salvation, who doesn't have union with Christ. The one who has humbled himself before God (a necessary component of salvation) cannot arrogantly claim to have no allegiance to God (for sinning is rebellion).

## **ROMANS 12-16**

Rom 13:10: Love is the fulfillment of the law. In the context here, Paul is quoting from the 10 Commandments which are summed up in the command to "love your neighbor." So loving one's neighbor fulfills some of the Mosaic Law. But this part of the Mosaic Law is part of God's timeless moral law, and it can be easily summarized in this one commandment.