

In the previous passages Paul has defended his ministry to the church of Corinth as being from God by pointing to the abundant grace that they experienced (1:12<sup>i</sup>,15<sup>ii</sup>). He claimed that his team brought the aroma of Christ (2:14,15<sup>iii</sup>). He asked, “Who is sufficient for these things?” Starting in chapter three verse five he answers his question.

*<sup>5</sup> Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,* 2 Corinthians 3:5 Our sufficiency is not in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us. It was not our good ideas, our intellect, our strategic planning, and training. In fact, it has nothing to do with something good in us, but rather it comes from the One who is good in us (Ephesians 3:7<sup>iv</sup>).

When I was serving in a denomination, they had strategy meetings and training sessions on how to grow your church, books on how to witness, evangelism campaigns, and the like. I am not saying God cannot use these methods, but if people rely on the method, they miss out on the power and wonder, of the all-sufficiency of God. We make our plans and ask God to be in them (Proverbs 16:9<sup>v</sup>), when His plan is for us to live in Him and watch what He can do when we make ourselves available to Him by walking in the Spirit. Pastor Vance Havner once wrote that *“the Lord had strength and I had weakness so we teamed up! The combination is unbeatable.”* That is confidence in the Lord rather than in self-sufficiency.

The accounts of the Old Testament illustrate this over and over again. When Moses was called by God, he complained that he could not speak well (Exodus 4:10<sup>vi</sup>). God reminded him that He was the one who made Moses’ mouth. He promised to be with his mouth and teach him what to say (Exodus 4:11,12<sup>vii</sup>). When God called Gideon, Gideon complained that his clan was the weakest, and he was the least in his father’s house (Judges 6:15<sup>viii</sup>). God responded in the next verse, “I will be with you!” God is the all-sufficient one. Isaiah saw the LORD and responded by declaring that he was a sinner, but the LORD had the angel take a coal from the altar and touch his lips (Isaiah 6:5-7<sup>ix</sup>). Jeremiah had Moses’ complaint of not being able to speak and added that he was too young. God told him he would go where he was sent and speak what he was told to say (Jeremiah 1:6,7<sup>x</sup>). And as we saw recently, when Jehoshaphat faced a great horde, he feared. He knew he was powerless, but he did the right thing. He looked to the Lord to be all he needed (2 Chronicles 20:3<sup>xi</sup>, 12<sup>xii</sup>). We need to come to a place where we recognize we are insufficient before we yield to His all-sufficiency.

Oswald Chambers wrote, *God can achieve his purpose either through the absence of human power and resources, or the abandonment of reliance on them. All through history God has chosen and used nobodies, because their unusual dependence on him made possible the unique display of his power and grace. He chose and used somebodies only when they renounced dependence on their natural abilities and resources.*<sup>xiii</sup>

One of the great misconceptions among Christians is that we have this idea that from a certain hour of the day we are going to go serve God. What are we doing with the rest of our time? We do not realize that we can be serving God when we rise in the morning, make our meals, go to work, relax and rest, and read our devotions. Paul tells us whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we are to do it all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31<sup>xiv</sup>). *When walking in the Spirit is our way of life, then we serve and*

glorify God without even realizing it. Even though we are unaware of it, we are spreading the fragrance of the knowledge of our Lord (2:14<sup>xv</sup>). A kind word here, a helping hand there, a menial task done as unto the Lord, everything we do can be in Him and with His life manifest in the fruits of the Spirit flowing through us.

That does not mean the flesh will not make its demands. But when we walk in the Spirit, we die daily to our fleshly nature. We crucify it over and over and walk in the light, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Colossians 3:5<sup>xvi</sup>, 16<sup>xvii</sup>). We pray as we go, continually looking to Immanuel, God with us. That is not a drudgery. It is joy inexpressible and full of glory (1 Peter 1:8<sup>xviii</sup>). What a lie Satan has perpetrated on mankind to think that a godly life is Pharisaical, boring, rule keeping, bondage. It is joy and peace, full of adventure and wonder. Certainly, it has difficult moments when we are tested, but that is part of the training to bring us to even greater joy and wonder.

Who is sufficient for these things? *Our sufficiency is from God!* We cannot stay in the Spirit on our own power. We cannot have the right words, the courage, or the will power on our own. It is the life of Christ in us. He is the life-giving Spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45<sup>xix</sup>). He is the One who raises the dead, opening our eyes each morning and putting a song in our hearts (Psalm 40:3<sup>xx</sup>).

*<sup>6</sup>who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.* 2 Corinthians 3:6 While Paul is defending his role as an apostle, he is clearly giving all the glory for the ministry he does to God as the source of the goodness in his life. God made him and his team, and I believe we can say anyone in Christ, to be ministers of the new covenant. He is our sufficiency! Paul declares later in this letter that it is precisely because he is weak that the power of God can be expressed through him (2 Corinthians 12:10<sup>xxi</sup>). God gives us the words to speak. He helps us understand the Scriptures. He leads us to the right people and coordinates our encounters. You are not in this church by accident. I am not in this role out of my own doing. If you knew my past, you would know how unlikely it is that I would become one of the elders. God is sovereignly directing all things to draw us to Himself. He gets all the glory. I think part of the wonder of heaven will be looking back and seeing all the times that God intervened in our lives and the lives of others.

Elders are ministers of the new covenant as we all can be. That is the covenant sealed by the blood of Jesus on the cross. Covenants throughout Scripture were sealed by blood, showing the seriousness of the agreement (Hebrews 9:18-20<sup>xxii</sup>). The author of the book of Hebrews tells us the new covenant was sealed with better blood than the blood of bulls and goats (Hebrews 10:4<sup>xxiii</sup>, 10<sup>xxiv</sup>; 9:12<sup>xxv</sup>). It was sealed with the precious blood of Christ. This covenant is not conditional upon our obedience as the one Moses received on Sinai. It is based on the obedience of Christ on our behalf. We simply choose to accept what He has done for us, which will result in a broken heart that the psalmist tells us God will not despise (Psalm 51:17<sup>xxvi</sup>).

There was a group of Jews who followed Paul everywhere he started a church. They would try to convince the new believers that salvation was based on what Jesus did AND their obedience to the laws of Moses. Paul is teaching here that the new covenant is all that is needed. Jesus fulfilled the Law. It all pointed to Him (Luke 24:44<sup>xxvii</sup>).

Elders are ministers of that new covenant, meaning that by the power of the Holy Spirit, they share it and help others understand the implications of it. They explain how

the Spirit works in our lives applying God's Word to sanctify our thoughts, speech, and behavior (John 17:17<sup>xxviii</sup>). We do not teach rules and formulas, referred to as the letter.

The Greek word for new in this verse means new in the sense of different not in the sense of time. In other words, it is entirely different and supersedes the old covenant (Hebrews 8:9<sup>xxix</sup>). That is because the letter kills. Just knowing the dos and don'ts is trusting in self. You can never be good enough for God. This is the misguided idea of the Judaizers and of all religions. It relies on us being too prideful to see how short we fall from God's glory (Romans 3:23<sup>xxx</sup>). "If we can just do this or that we can please God," they say. That is pride talking, and pride will resist grace that declares it was done for you. God is holy. **We can only please God by being in Jesus who died for our sins that we might be credited with His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21<sup>xxxi</sup>).** Then we can receive the Spirit who gives us life. Life is His breath in us, following His lead, letting Him express life to others through us, introducing others to this wonderful new covenant.

It is important to understand that faith has always been the way of salvation. Before Jesus came, it was faith that God would provide a way. The sacrifices prescribed in the Law all looked forward to the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. The prophets told of the day this new covenant would come and when it did, it would not only be the answer to the Jewish dilemma of never being able to keep all the laws (Psalm 14:3<sup>xxxii</sup>; James 2:10<sup>xxxiii</sup>; Jeremiah 31:31-33<sup>xxxiv</sup>), but it would also be proclaimed to the whole world (Isaiah 49:6<sup>xxxv</sup>). The new covenant in Jesus' blood is the only hope for Jew and Gentile. At the Last Supper Jesus took the third cup of the Passover Seder and proclaimed the predicted time had come. He said, "*This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.*" Luke 22:20

There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12<sup>xxxvi</sup>). Those who lived before Christ could find salvation and the joy of forgiveness just like we do after Christ. They repented of their sins, responded to God's grace by looking to God to provide atonement for their sins (Psalm 32:1,2<sup>xxxvii</sup>). The only difference is that we know how the means of atonement was provided.

*<sup>7</sup> Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, <sup>8</sup> will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory?* 2 Corinthians 3:7,8  
The ministry of death that Paul is referring to is the Ten Commandments that Moses received on Sinai written by the finger of God in stone. It came with such glory that the mountain shook. Lightning flashed and fire descended on the mountain as it smoked continually while the top was enveloped in the glory cloud. When Moses came down from the mountain, the glory of the Lord shown on his face and the people asked that he veil it as it was hard to look at him. That is amazingly glorious. You would never forget that sight. And yet, Paul calls it the ministry of death. As he said, the letter kills. The law condemns us. It is meant to show us how far short we fall from God's glory.

Ray Comfort uses the Ten Commandments to witness to people because people will never know how much they need a Savior unless they know how sinful we all are. He asks the person if they have ever taken something from work that was not theirs. They usually have, and that makes them a thief. He asks if they have ever lusted after a person. Who has not? That means they are an adulterer (Matthew 5:28<sup>xxxviii</sup>). He asks if they ever lied. That makes them bearer of false witness. "Therefore," he explains, "You admitted

you are a lying, thieving, adulterer! Why would God let you into His heaven?” That is harsh, but it is true. The letter condemns us. The person realizes they need a Savior. Then he shares the gospel, and in the process, he is a minister of the new covenant.

Apostle Paul puts it another way. He says he wanted to keep the law, but the law prompted his mind to want to do what he knew he was not supposed to do (Romans 7:7-9<sup>xxix</sup>). He says the law tells him not to covet, and he starts coveting things. The law that was meant to bring life resulted in death. It kills so that we can be born-again by the new covenant that brings life.

When the Spirit speaks through us to a needy soul, resulting in us sharing the love of Christ, and eventually the wonder of the gracious gift of God in Christ Jesus, there is a glorious transformation from death to life. Paul says that is more glorious than what happened on Sinai! Jesus said when that happens, all the angels in heaven rejoice (Luke 15:7<sup>xl</sup>). A soul steps out the dark bondage of Satan and their own carnal desires and steps into the glorious light of the liberty of the sons of God. Their dead and empty spirit is filled with the Holy Spirit of God who will begin transforming their lives. When we see someone take that step, we need to realize the glory we are witnessing. We cannot see and hear it like they did at Sinai, nevertheless it is more glorious. If we saw the joy in heaven, we would realize that. The person’s eternal future is changed and as a result, they will influence others to enter the new covenant.

*<sup>9</sup> For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory.* 2 Corinthians 3:9 The law that was given to Moses condemns us all as sinners. It was glorious. Not only was it glorious in how it was delivered, but the rules were glorious in that they showed us how man was meant to live. The more they tried to obey them, the better off they were. Their rules were far ahead of the cultures around them. They taught sanitation, isolation of infectious disease, gave dietary laws for health, but most of all foreshadowed the coming of the Messiah and what He would do for us. But the reality of what if foreshadowed would be immeasurably greater as person is to a photo (3:3<sup>xli</sup>). The glory of one far exceeds the other. That is true in life as well. Someone who communicates the letter of the law is passing along information. The one who speaks by the Spirit the words of life brings the glory of God. One may impress the mind, the other touches our very souls.

*<sup>10</sup> Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it.* 2 Corinthians 3:10 I often meet people who cannot grasp this concept. They look to the letter for life. Yes, it once had glory, but now the presence of the Holy Spirit and the life He brings passes it to such a degree that the first has no glory at all. Its time has passed. That does not mean that we should not study the Old Testament. There are eternal truths and insightful revelations of God and of our condition. We see our own weaknesses in it. We learn lessons from those who have gone before and failed, but then were restored and continue in faith. It was the source of much of the teaching of the Apostles, for they did not have the written New Testament. But they taught the Old Testament in the light of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. They heard Jesus explain how it was all about Him (Luke 24:44<sup>xlii</sup>). The glory it has now is mostly because of how it was fulfilled in Jesus.

*<sup>11</sup> For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.* 2 Corinthians 3:11 Paul is repeating this theme over and over

because he wants them to live by the Spirit instead of the letter. The Jews who found Jesus as their Messiah had a hard time letting go of the ritual obedience to the laws of Moses and the traditions of Judaism. They have a hard time today. Our dear brother Michael told me it took several years being back in Israel before he was delivered from a religious spirit. I am sure deliverance came through his study of passages like the one we are reading as the Spirit illuminated the truth of it.

Christians today have a similar battle. We like formulas and routines that make us feel as if we are pleasing God and being a spiritual person. If you can go without prayer and never hear the Spirit's direction, if songs of praise do not rise up in your heart, you are probably living the letter rather than the Spirit. Jesus tells us to ask our good Father and He will give us the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13<sup>xliii</sup>).

Hudson Taylor, that great missionary to China, wrote, "God chose me because I was weak enough. God does not do his work by large committees. He trains somebody to be quiet enough, and little enough, and then uses him."<sup>xliv</sup> Quiet enough and little enough, what a great revelation from the Holy Spirit by the Word. Notice he said that God *trains* somebody to be quiet and little (Psalm 46:10<sup>xlv</sup>). I think He is trying to train us all in the same manner. It is just that our pride gets in the way, and we refuse to be still and know that He is God and that we are not. We think our good ideas will bear eternal fruit for the kingdom of God, only to find in the end they were vanity. God's training is often down a path of brokenness and humbling situations to open our eyes to our true condition so that we learn to become totally dependent on the all-sufficient One.

If you think your weakness disqualifies you from being able to serve in some capacity, remember that our weakness is an opportunity for God's strength. <sup>26</sup> *For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.* <sup>27</sup> *But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;* <sup>28</sup> *God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,* <sup>29</sup> *so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.* 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 God is looking for insufficient people so that He can be all-sufficient through them. May the Lord help us to be still enough to silence our own egos and sit before His Word and let it speak to our hearts. Then humbly go in faith and let Him lead us throughout each day and see His life bringing glory to God through us.

Questions:

- 1 Where did Paul's team find their sufficiency?
- 2 Have you experienced the Havner quote?
- 3 Review the Old Testament examples of strength from weakness.
- 4 How can we continually bring glory to God?
- 5 What is the difference between the letter and the Spirit?
- 6 What is the only way to please God?
- 7 Contrast the glory of old covenant with that of the new?
- 8 How does Ray Comfort use the letter?
- 9 Why do we still study the Old Testament?
- 10 Review the Hudson Taylor quote.

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<sup>i</sup> **2 Corinthians 1:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you.

<sup>ii</sup> **2 Corinthians 1:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> Because I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a second experience of grace.

<sup>iii</sup> **2 Corinthians 2:14-15 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. <sup>15</sup> For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing,

<sup>iv</sup> **Ephesians 3:7 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

<sup>v</sup> **Proverbs 16:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps.

<sup>vi</sup> **Exodus 4:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> But Moses said to the LORD, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue."

<sup>vii</sup> **Exodus 4:11-12 (ESV)**

<sup>11</sup> Then the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?" <sup>12</sup> Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak."

<sup>viii</sup> **Judges 6:15 (ESV)**

<sup>15</sup> And he said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

<sup>ix</sup> **Isaiah 6:5-7 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" <sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

<sup>x</sup> **Jeremiah 1:6-7 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth." <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak.

<sup>xi</sup> **2 Chronicles 20:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> Then Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

<sup>xii</sup> **2 Chronicles 20:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

<sup>xiii</sup> "Man's Weakness—God's Strength," *Missionary Crusader* (December 1964), p. 7. as quoted in R. Kent Hughes, *2 Corinthians, Power in Weakness, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006).

<sup>xiv</sup> **1 Corinthians 10:31 (ESV)**

<sup>31</sup> So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

<sup>xv</sup> **2 Corinthians 2:14 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

<sup>xvi</sup> **Colossians 3:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

<sup>xvii</sup> **Colossians 3:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

<sup>xviii</sup> **1 Peter 1:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory,

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<sup>xix</sup> **1 Corinthians 15:45 (ESV)**

<sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

<sup>xx</sup> **Psalms 40:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

<sup>xxi</sup> **1 Corinthians 15:45 (ESV)**

<sup>45</sup> Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

<sup>xxii</sup> **Hebrews 9:18-20 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. <sup>19</sup> For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, <sup>20</sup> saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.”

<sup>xxiii</sup> **Hebrews 10:4 (ESV)**

<sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

<sup>xxiv</sup> **Hebrews 10:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

<sup>xxv</sup> **Hebrews 9:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

<sup>xxvi</sup> **Psalms 51:17 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

<sup>xxvii</sup> **Luke 24:44 (ESV)**

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

<sup>xxviii</sup> **John 17:17 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

<sup>xxix</sup> **Hebrews 8:9 (ESV)**

<sup>9</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord.

<sup>xxx</sup> **Romans 3:23 (ESV)**

<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

<sup>xxxi</sup> **2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>xxxii</sup> **Psalms 14:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> **James 2:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> **Jeremiah 31:31-33 (ESV)**

<sup>31</sup> “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. <sup>33</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

<sup>xxxv</sup> **Isaiah 49:6 (ESV)**

<sup>6</sup> he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

<sup>xxxvi</sup> **Acts 4:12 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

<sup>xxxvii</sup> **Psalms 32:1-2 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> **Matthew 5:28 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

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<sup>xxxix</sup> **Romans 7:7-9 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” <sup>8</sup> But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. <sup>9</sup> I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

<sup>xl</sup> **Luke 15:7 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

<sup>xli</sup> **2 Corinthians 3:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

<sup>xlii</sup> **Luke 24:44 (ESV)**

<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

<sup>xliii</sup> **Luke 11:13 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

<sup>xliv</sup> Gail MacDonald, *High Call, High Privilege* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), p. 222<sup>xliv</sup> Quoted by R. Kent Hughes, *2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006), 71.

<sup>xlv</sup> **Psalms 46:10 (ESV)**

<sup>10</sup> “Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”