

Four Laws that Govern Our Lives
Part Two
The Law of the Mind

- *The laws of God run as a central theme through the book of Romans. In the New Testament, the book of Romans deals most extensively with the law. Of the 158 times the word law is used in the New Testament, it is found 51 times in Romans.*
- *While there are many different laws spoken about in Romans we are going to focus on four laws found in Romans which apply to each one of us on an individual basis. Two laws came into effect at our physical birth and two laws come into effect at our spiritual birth. As Christians we are subject to these four laws and if we apply them correctly the result will be an overcoming life.*
- *The first two laws come into effect at our physical birth: the Law of Sin and Death (Romans 7:23, 25; 8:2), and the Law of the Mind (Romans 7:23). These two laws will either produce bondage and death or freedom and life depending on how we apply them.*
- *The second two laws come into effect at our spiritual birth: the Law of Faith (Romans 3:27), and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2). Applying these second two laws to our lives will result in victorious and fruitful lives.*
- *For us to see God's grace, redemption, and victory released in our lives in respect to each of these four laws we need to operate according to another principle—recognizing the power of our tongues and the confession of our mouths.*
- *As we study each of these four laws we will see there are four types of confession that relate to each of these laws. The appropriate type of confession in relationship to each of these laws will result in the release of God's grace in our lives.*
- *Last week we studied the Law of Sin and Death. The Law of Sin and Death is neutral because it can be used in a positive or a negative way. If we ignore or disregard this law and choose to sin, we will find ourselves in increasing bondage to sin and experience the destructive consequences of sin in our lives.*
- *However, if we choose to respond to God and apply the appropriate confession it will lead to forgiveness, cleansing, and freedom. The confession that relates to the Law of Sin and Death is the confession of our sins.*

- *Through the Law of Sin and Death, Jesus was able to die for our sins so we could be forgiven and saved and live free from the penalty and the power of sin, enabling us to live lives that bring glory to God.*
- *Today we are going to study the second law—the Law of the Mind.*
- *Apostle Paul wrote in Romans, Chapter seven, about a time in his life when he found himself engaged in an internal war between the Law of the Mind and the Law of Sin. “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” (Romans 7:22-23).*
- *This internal struggle that Paul experienced did not take place before he received Christ but after he became a follower of Jesus!*
- *Before a person receives Christ they are separated from God and they are given over to the Law of Sin. There is no inner struggle against sin because they sought only to satisfy their selfish sinful desires. “For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.” (1 Peter 4:3).*
- *Once a person is born again they have a new nature in their reborn spirit and a new identity in Christ. Their old sinful nature has been crucified with Christ, “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” (Romans 6:6).*
- *However, their old sinful habits located in their flesh continue to try to resist the new life of Christ in their reborn spirit. Our soul is the battle ground where we need to choose daily to submit to the spirit and resist the flesh. Although as believers we may desire to do what is right we may still find ourselves struggling to actually live the way we should.*
- *As a young Christian who desired to serve God in holiness, Paul described how he found himself doing the complete opposite to what he knew to be right. This contradiction between what he desired to do and what he was doing completely bewildered him. “For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.” (Romans 7:15).*
- *Paul recognized that if his actions were in complete contrast to what he truly wanted to do then it was the sinful impulses in his flesh (the Law of Sin) which were impeding his ability to do the good he truly wanted to do. “If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.” “For the good that I will to do,*

I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.” (*Romans 7:16-17, 19-21*).

- *Paul was confronted by what seemed to be a hopeless situation because he was being ruled by his fleshly impulses although he sought to live a godly life. He was faced with a perplexing problem. How to overcome this bondage to sin? “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.” (Romans 7:18).*
- *In Romans 7:24 Paul summarized how he felt about himself and the bondage in which he found himself. “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”*
- *At this point it sounded like Paul was on the verge of falling into total self-condemnation and despair but then he turned his attention away from his failures and turned his attention to Jesus. “I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” (Romans 7:25).*
- *When reading Romans, Chapter seven, and Paul’s account of how at one point in his early walk with Jesus he struggled with his flesh and its sinful impulses, we must be careful not to misinterpret what he was saying.*
- *First, Paul was not making an excuse for sin and suggesting that we should accept the idea that it is okay to continue to live under the bondage of sin. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” (Romans 6:1-2).*
- *Second, Paul was not saying that if we choose to sin then we can claim “The devil made me do it.” We still need to take responsibility for our lives. There is also big difference between struggling against sin and choosing to willingly participate in sin.*
- *Third, Paul was not saying that although we have received Jesus and are saved we will always find ourselves defeated by sin. We can be free from the power of sin and the internal torment that sin produces.*
- *As long as we are in our mortal bodies, the war between our new identity in Christ and our old sinful nature wages on. This is not a single battle, but a war fought one battle at a time.*

- *Paul was saying that if we truly desire to be free from sin there still may be seasons as we go through the sanctification process, where we will struggle with sin and even fail.*
- *During times of struggles and failures we must resist the enemy's attempts to bury us under shame and condemnation. Instead, simply come to Jesus and confess your sins, repent, and accept His forgiveness and cleansing.*
- *Paul tells us that we must choose between walking according to the flesh and walking according to the Spirit. Only in Jesus can we find freedom and victory over the power of sin. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans 8:1-2).*
- *The first two laws that govern us when we are born physically, the Law of Sin and Death and the Law of the Mind, are neutral and can affect us in a beneficial way or in a destructive way. The second two laws that govern us when we are born again, the Law of Faith and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus are not only positive, but are the key for us to live a victorious life free from the power of sin.*
- *However, before we study the Law of Faith and the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus we need to first understand how the Law of the Mind operates.*
- *The Law of the Mind reveals how our thoughts and desires are shaped by the things we choose to think upon and act upon.*
- *The Law of the Mind can either conform us to the flesh or our renewed minds can transform us into the image of Jesus. "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2).*
- *"And do not be conformed to this world" – The Greek word translated as "conformed" means "to form or mold one's behaviour in accordance with a particular pattern or set of standards." The idea of conforming implies that the changes are due to external pressures.*
- *As born again Christians our true identity is in Christ but if we allow the world and its standards to influence us, the world will mold the way we think, speak and act in a way that is totally contrary to the Word of God and which will produce destructive consequences.*
- *God is good and His Word is not prohibitive but protective. However, when we are influenced by the world and the devil we will see God's commandments in a*

negative light instead of what they truly are—a source of protection and blessings.

- ***“but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” The Greek word for “transformation” is μεταμορφῶω (metamorphoō) and in contrast to being conformed it speaks about a total change and to become completely different. From it we derive our English word metamorphosis, referring to how a caterpillar is transformed into a completely new creation—a butterfly!***
- ***If we choose to be led by the Spirit then the life of Christ in our reborn spirit will take us through the process to transform our souls into His image. Our transformed soul will result in a renewed mind so we will clearly be able to “prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”***
- ***We will be able to see through God’s eyes and think with the mind of Christ!***
- ***Being conformed to this world or being transformed by the renewing of our minds into the image of Jesus deals with our minds and is governed by the Law of the Mind.***
- ***The world and the devil are constantly trying to corrupt not only unbelievers but believers. Jesus warned us that in the end times the pressure from the world on believers to compromise truth and holiness will be so great that He said, “I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).***
- ***Jesus encourages us with the promise that His Church will be victorious. Satan, his kingdom, and his schemes will all be overcome. “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18).***
- ***God’s has a divine strategy for us to be able to overcome the deception of this world and resist its pressures and darkness to conform and mold us into its image. God’s strategy involves applying the Law of the Mind in the way God intended.***
- ***The devil has two main strategies to conform the way believers act and think in ways that are contrary to God’s Word.***
- ***One way the devil influences believers to conform their minds to the world is to slowly and continuously expose them to sin and uncleanness. This causes the lines between truth and lies and purity and impurity to become blurred. Sin is so pervasive and normalized that it confuses their thinking. Eventually they look at evil and call it good and look at good and call it evil. “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (Isaiah 5:20).***

- *The second way that the devil influences believers to conform their minds to the world is to distract them away from communion with God and instead to focus on all the injustice, lawlessness, and defilement that surrounds them. This actually produces a fleshly response, as they grow angry and judgmental. “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.” (Matthew 24:12).*
- *Christians whose love has grown cold are not even aware of it. They are so blinded by their own hostility toward both believers and unbelievers that they do not recognize that their actions and words are distorting rather than promoting the Gospel.*
- *As we study the Law of the Mind we can learn how to “gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 1:13). We can also learn how not to be “conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.” (1 Peter 1:14b-15).*
- *We can witness the Law of the Mind both in a positive way and a negative way by looking at the lives of Abraham and Lot.*
- *The Law of the Mind can be broken down into seven different steps with each step entrenching the way we think and evaluate things: Attention; Attraction; Decision; Habitual Action; Obsession; Possession; Set Direction.*
- *1. Attention*
- *Both the world and God are seeking our attention. Until someone is able to get our attention we cannot be influenced.*
- *At this point we can still easily dismiss the enemy’s influence over our lives by simply choosing to ignore ungodly things.*
- *We must also choose to respond to God when He is speaking to us.*
- *God allowed strife between Abram’s herdsmen and Lot’s herdsmen because Abram had not followed God’s instructions fully. “Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you.”” (Genesis 12:1). “So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him.” (Genesis 12:4a).*
- *There is one point about attention. You cannot be attentive to two things at the same time. Either the devil has our attention or God. We listen to whoever has our attention.*

- **2. Attraction**
- *Once someone has your attention they need to get your interest otherwise you will not respond any further.*
- *Abraham's solution to the conflict was to allow Lot to choose where he wanted to live and Abraham would accept whatever was left. "So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."'" (Genesis 13:8-9).*
- *Lot was attracted to the glitter of the Sodom and Gomorrah even though it was totally corrupted by sexual immorality. "And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar." (Genesis 13:10).*
- *Abram was attracted to the promises God revealed to him. "And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered." (Genesis 13:14-16).*
- **3. Decision**
- *Decision is when we actually make the choice whether to act on what is attracting us.*
- *Decision leads us into a deeper commitment to whatever is attracting us.*
- *Lot was self-willed and acted on what appealed to him and what he was attracted to. He chose to pursue the apparent glamour of Sodom ignoring the sin and corruption. He wanted all that the world was offering. "Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan." (Genesis 13:11a).*
- *Abram, instead of being self-willed, waited on God and allowed God to make the choice for him. "Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you." (Genesis 13:17). Abram believed that God's ways were best and accepted what God offered him.*
- *Our choices are based on what attracts us. Is it God's love or the world's lusts?*

- *Jesus mirrored this same example of submitting to the Father's will knowing that His Father's will was the very best. "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." (Luke 22:42).*
- **4. Habitual Action**
- *Habitual action is where we repeatedly make the same choices which results in us becoming more and more committed to the direction we have chosen.*
- *Lot began his journey toward Sodom. "and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other." (Genesis 13:11b).*
- *Each step Lot took on his journey to Sodom brought him one step closer to dwelling there. Lot was still not aware of the heartbreak, loss, defilement, and bondage that awaited him at the end of his journey. Nor was Lot aware how his one decision would negatively affect his wife and his daughters' lives.*
- *When Abram heard the voice of the Lord instructing him to begin his journey towards the promises of God he immediately began to walk. "Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you." (Genesis 13:17). Abram walked through the length and breadth of God's promises and as he did the promises of God and His faithfulness would have grown more real in his heart.*
- *As we develop the discipline of habitually walking with God as we journey with Him and spend time in His Word and in prayer, His promises and faithfulness grow more real in our hearts. "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night." (Psalm 1:2).*
- *The difference between Lot's habitual action and Abram's is stark. When Abram made his journey through the Promised Land he drew closer to God with the assurance "for I give it to you."*
- *Unlike Abram's journey which led him to be closer to God, Lot's journey led him to be more isolated from godly fellowship and godly influence. "and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other."*
- **5. Obsession**
- *Obsession is where one is giving himself over to what he has chosen and pursued.*

- *If someone pursues sin at the habitual action stage they may enjoy their sin, but they may still have a sense of guilt or shame. However, as the person continues to follow the journey they become totally obsessed by the lust of the flesh.*
- *A Christian who continues to pursue God becomes obsessed with Jesus. Their hearts burn brightly with that first love. Their thoughts are dwelling on how wonderful God is and all that He has done for them.*
- *Lot became so obsessed with the glamour of Sodom that he pitched his tent facing that wicked city. “and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.” (Genesis 13:12).*
- *Just as the Jews build their synagogues facing Jerusalem, Lot pitched his tent facing Sodom.*
- *Abram’s obsession with God is seen as he pitched his tent right in the midst of the Promised Land. “Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.” (Genesis 13:18).*
- *While Lot set up his tent to face Sodom, Abram set up his tent in the very center of God’s promises.*
- *Men and women of God who are obsessed with the promises of God will see them fulfilled.*
- *6. Possession*
- *Obsession is where we are fully focused on what initially attracted us.*
- *Possession is where what we are attracted to has taken hold of us.*
- *Paul saw himself as belonging fully to Jesus. “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6:20).*
- *Paul no longer saw his ministry as something he was doing simply because he wanted to. Because he belonged to Christ, Paul was compelled by God’s love. “For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16).*
- *Lot found himself as a possession of a conquering army of four kings. He was no longer free to do what he wanted but he and all his family and possession were controlled by another. “And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot,*

Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.
(Genesis 14:11-12).

- *Possession is where the bondage of sin becomes apparent. “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.” (John 8:34).*
- *Abram made the decision to fully belong to God and become His possession. Abram set up his dwelling place and built an altar to the Lord. The altar was the place of full surrender where it was no longer about him but about God. “Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, **and built an altar there to the LORD.**” (Genesis 13:18).*
- *The enemy takes us captive by force. The Lord asks us and by our free choice we must surrender so we may become His possession.*
- *Lot was taken captive by four kings and Abraham was taken captive by the King of Kings.*
- *7. Set Direction*
- *This is where we become immoveable and fully entrenched in our choices where no amount of persuasion will cause us to change.*
- *Paul’s direction was set and nothing could move him from the course that Jesus had set before him. “But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:24).*
- *After Lot had been taken captive by the four kings, Abraham came and delivered him from captivity so he was free to go where he chose. “So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.” Genesis 14:16).*
- *Sadly, after Abraham delivered Lot from bondage he returned right back to dwell in Sodom and he even became a prominent man in that wicked city, sitting at the city gates. “Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.” (Genesis 19:1).*
- *Abraham had also developed a set direction and nothing would stop him from trusting and obeying God. “Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a*

burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”” (Genesis 22:2).

- *Because Abraham completed the full journey of having his mind conformed to God’s ways he inherited the full promises of God. “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”” (Genesis 22:16–18).*
- *On the other hand Lot failed to pursue God. Instead of overcoming temptations and sin he became fully enslaved to them and failed to inherit any of the purposes God had for him. Although Lot was a believer his life was fruitless and filled with torment and loss. “and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds).” (2 Peter 2:7-8).*
- *Repentance is the process where we realize we are headed in a wrong and destructive direction and choose to turn away from sin and turn toward God and allow Him to lead us along the path of righteousness where we are transformed into His image.*
- *The confession that relates to the Law of the Mind is an honest confession.*
- *Even as Paul honestly confessed his failings and struggles, we need to be able to turn to others and God and share how we are honestly feeling.*
- *If we are struggling with depression, fear or discouragement we need to be able to share with others how we are truly feeling without shame or condemnation.*
- *An honest confession is where we don’t try to pretend everything is fine when it is not.*
- *True repentance begins when we can be transparent and then allow God to bring about those changes in our thinking. Repentance is a journey where our thoughts and attitudes are changed.*
- *The Law of the Mind shows us that patience is required for our minds to be renewed but it is a glorious journey although there may be times when it is difficult. However, Jesus is always with us on our journey.*

Psalm 119:59 (NKJV)

⁵⁹I thought about my ways, And turned my feet to Your testimonies.

