

Romans 7 - Who Are You Married To?

Rom 7 introduces “**the new way of the Spirit vs the old way of the written code**”

Audience: Jewish believers asking, *If justification by faith in Christ, what is our relationship to the Mosaic law?*

We too can live a law-filled Christian life - measuring our relationship with God by rules, performance, and duty

Rom 8 will deal primarily with the new way of the Spirit → **Today Rom 7 the old way of the written code**

Allegory of marriage, marriage produces fruit, (What fruit comes from married to law, belong to another)

What is my relationship to the law? The law is binding on a person → ONLY AS LONG AS HE LIVES

»» Rom 7:1 Or do you not know, brothers--for I am speaking to those who know the law--that **the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives**?

ALLEGORY »» (2 For a married woman is **bound by law to her husband while he lives**, but if her husband dies **she is released from the law of marriage**. 3 Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. **But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.**)

»» 4 **Likewise**, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that **you may belong to another**, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

- **Radical concept** → But will I become lawless? No ...you **BELONG to another and bear fruit for God**

»» 5 For **while we were** living in the flesh, **our sinful passions, aroused by the law**, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6 But **now we are** released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that **we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.**

- **While we were** (past) - married to before we died... law **aroused our sinful passions**, fruit unto death
- **Now we are** (present) - released - we serve in the NEW WAY of the Spirit, → bear fruit for God

»» 7 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."

- **One purpose of the law is to make me aware of sin → if it does that PRAISE GOD**

»» 8 But **sin, seizing an opportunity** through the commandment, **produced in me all kinds of covetousness**.

- **Sin is personified/opportunistic** -- the fruit **produced** is the very thing the law is meant to prevent
- “Wet Paint” sign → the law didn’t produce it, sin **produced** it, but marriage to the law keeps producing

»» For apart from the law, sin lies dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

- **Before the law came, I thought I was OK** (*like the guy that didn’t realize the speed limit was 30*)

»» 10 The very **commandment that promised life** proved to be death to me. 11 For sin, seizing an **opportunity** through the commandment, **deceived** me and through it **killed** me.

- »» Deu 30:15-16 "See, I have set before you today **life and good, death and evil**. **16 If you obey the commandments** of the LORD your God that I command you today.....**then you shall live**
- **Sin once again personified/opportunistic deceived me and killed me**

>>> 12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. 13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! **It was sin, producing death in me through what is good**, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

- Sin personified again...producing death
- **THE LAW** → shows sin to be sin → and that sin might become sinful beyond measure
- We tend to think the law keeps us from sin, but it provokes the very thing it tells us not to do.
- The law can show us what is righteous, but it does not have the power to produce righteousness.

>>> 14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but **I am of the flesh, sold under sin**. 15 For I do not understand my own actions. For **I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate**. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, **I agree with the law, that it is good**. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but **sin that dwells within me**.

- Often quoted as normal Christian experience - "in the flesh" vs 5 is about marriage to the law
- Paul is actually describing the person married to the law, only able to produce death

>>> 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, **in my flesh**. For ***I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out***. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

- "In my flesh" is referring to life before Christ see v5 For **while we were** living in the flesh, **our sinful passions, aroused by the law**, were at work in our members **to bear fruit for death**
- If you apply this to the "normal" Christian life you to rebuild what Paul just tore down in Romans 6
 - Rom 6:7 For one who has **died** has been **set free from sin**.
 - Rom 6:14 **sin will have no dominion** over you, **since you are not under law** but under grace.

>>> 21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. 22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, 23 but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

- This is simply a sign that **the law is doing what it was intended to do** - show us the sinfulness of sin
- Showing us what righteousness is but not having the power to produce righteousness

>>> 24 Wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me from this body of death?** 25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

- Belonging to another—that is to Christ is the only answer - only that will produce fruit unto God
- **V4 We died to the law...6:7 if dead free from sin 6:14 no dominion ...since you are not under law**

Do Christians still struggle against sin, yes, see Galatians 5...walk in spirit you will not gratify the flesh

- The Christian struggle is evidence of the new conflict created by the Spirit's presence
- But don't use Romans 7 to normalize what Romans 6 says has been broken.

Married to the Law: *"I know what God wants, but I cannot produce it."*

Belonging to Christ: *"I belong to Him, and His Spirit is producing in me what God desires."*

Rom 8:1 There is no condemnation for those in Christ...v4 who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit

If I am "married" to the law:

- *I tend to measure myself by performance.*
- *I focus on what I'm supposed to do.*
- *Preoccupied with rules, standards, and appearances.*

If I belong to Christ:

- *I obey because I love Him.*
- *I depend upon Him rather than myself.*
- *I want to please Him, not merely satisfy a requirement.*

- *Failure produces shame or self-condemnation.*
- *Success can produce pride.*
- *The focus becomes "**Am I doing enough?**"*

- *Failure drives me back to Him.*
- *His life begins producing fruit through me.*
- *The focus becomes "**How can Christ's life be expressed through me?**"*