

Romans 7

1-3 Paul is describing our relation to the law and then to Christ. In the last chapter he used slavery as illustration. In this chapter he uses marriage. He apologized for the slavery example 6:19, but not for the marriage example. If our old self has died we are no longer under the law - "as long as you both shall live" you are married to Another. If you are trying to be a Christian in the old nature it is a double wrong for you are still married to the rules but wanting to live with grace.

4 Paul is beginning to illustrate their relation to the Law. They were once married to it, but dying with Christ they have been now raised to new life in which we are the bride of Christ. His Spirit is now what we are obligated to obey, not the rules He had given us in our former life. Now we bear fruit for it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord. The works under the Law bore no fruit, but life in the Spirit does. The husband is Lord over the wife. When it was sin, we had the cold strict husband – the Law; while now our husband is Jesus, the best possible. Galatians 2:19, 5:18

5 As we dwell on the Law the things that it forbids are contemplated and as we do so we end up erring in thought if not in deed. The end product of dwelling on what is forbidden or commanded is the fruit of death because the Law does not give us power over the sinful nature. It merely points out how sinful we are. John 3:6; Titus 3:3

6 This could be a summary verse of the first 8 chapters of Romans/ the new way of the Spirit and not the old way of the written code. Marriage is an illustration that comes up again in Ephesians 5. How much more wonderful to be married to the living Lord Jesus than a set of rules! We slip back into the old way when the Spirit is not allowed free reign in our lives. We fall back on the do's and don'ts. How do we stay serving in a fresh uninterrupted relationship with the Spirit, the new way? Recognize how wonderful your loving husband Jesus is. That will keep you from wanting to go back to the demanding dead husband = the Law.

“Do this and live the Law demands but gives me neither feet nor hands

A better word the gospel brings, It bids me fly and gives me wings.”

Galatians 4:4-5; 2 Corinthians 3:6

7 1-6 was a continuation of the idea of being dead to the Law and alive to new Life. Now in verse 7-13 he tells of the frustrating effort of trying to keep the Law in the old nature. This must have been his experience before He saw the truth of Romans 6. The law is not bad. It just points out where we err. Paul picks the one sin we are all guilty of to help us grasp what he is saying.

8 He said this in an earlier chapter 4:15. The Law clearly tells us what God expects. If we did not know this it would not be held against us, but since we know it is a command of God, when we do it any way, we are walking in rebellion. There is no rebellion if we do not know the command. 1 Corinthians 15:56

9 If you haven't suppressed the truth like in chapter 1, and you live according to your conscious, you have no guilt. But then you read God's commands and suddenly more truth is revealed, truth that because of your desires you must now suppress and so you end up worse off. Matthew 19:20; Romans 3:19-20

10,11 If God had not told Adam and Eve, "You shall not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil", they would not have had a problem. Satan's real temptation was first, "Has God said...?" Is Paul getting at the justifications we often use in our minds to get around what we know is God's will? In the garden, Satan got Eve to question the motivation of God's command. That became her justification for disobedience. Jeremiah 17:9; James 1:22

12 There is nothing wrong with the Law. In fact, it is holy. It just does not give the remedy. See verse 14. 1 Timothy 1:8

13 The Law is a revelation of the desire of God for the Israelites. It is holy and good. It contained moral and sanitary health laws. The problem is no one could keep them all. Knowing what it says and not keeping it makes the breaking of it doubly wrong. An immoral act is wrong. Your conscience may warn you of that, but having it in writing and still breaking it, makes it utterly sinful, for you know you are rebelling against God. Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:21