

Married to Christ – Romans 7

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, good morning everyone. Are we enjoying a lengthy summer? We have some beautiful weather. We can praise God for that.
- He is looking kindly down on the farmers around here, right? And on all of us. I am anticipating running a combine a bit this fall as well.
- So I'm going to be doing that for the first time. I'm looking forward to it. I'm enjoying this weather. I'm enjoying the season we're in. And so just praising God for his goodness.
- We're in chapter 7 of Romans this morning. Working our way through. And so a few Sundays ago, last time I was up, we were in Romans chapter 5.
- And we looked at two Adams. The first Adam and the last Adam. Who were Adam and Christ. And we read that Adam was a type of him who was to come, speaking of Christ.
- [1 : 1 2] And so we did a comparison then on the two. We put the two side by side and we made the comparison. It had the chart up showing the similarities. And we could see that there was a connection there.
- The similarities were there. And yet, when both of them, when they had been faced with temptation, the similarities ended.
- From that point on, Christ countered all the consequences of Adam's choice.
- You know, Adam chose to sin. And it led him down one path. And Christ, on the other hand, remained sinless. He did not give in to temptation.
- And so from that point forward, everything that Christ did countered what Adam had done. So we know that Adam's choice to sin brought judgment.
- [2 : 1 4] It brought condemnation. And ultimately, death to all mankind. On the other hand, we saw that Christ's act of righteousness offered the gift of righteousness.
- Justification and life to all who would accept this free gift. Chapter 5 then closed with making a connection between the law and sin.
- By telling us that the law entered that the offense, or sin, might abound. And yet, where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.
- And that in chapter 5. So then chapter 6 started by raising the obvious question then. Well, if the law has come in that sin might abound, but grace will abound even more.
- Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? It's a question that comes up, right? Is it a license to sin that there could be more grace?
- [3 : 2 4] The answer was certainly not. If we have died to sin, we shouldn't live in it anymore. If the old man was crucified with Christ, we should no longer be a slave to sin.
- And that doesn't mean that we won't sin anymore. But it's that sin should no longer have dominion over us. It should not dominate our life. It should not characterize us.
- And then as we heard last Sunday, if we do choose to continue in sin, it has become a choice. We can't blame anywhere else.

Say we didn't have a choice. We do have a choice. 1 Corinthians tells us that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able.

And with that temptation, he will make a way of escape. So choosing to sin is choosing. It is a choice we make. We do have a choice.

[4 : 31] So today it's up to us to decide who will sit on the throne in our lives. So as we're looking into chapter 7 here today, it circles back to the end of chapter 5, where Paul touched on the law, right?

And so we need to see where the connection is made with the law, what is meant by this, right?

It makes the connection with the law being connected to sin. And so in chapter 6, it established that when our old man was crucified with Christ, we died to sin, right?

And so if the law is connected to the sin, if we've died to sin, where is law in all of this?

What happens now, right? And so all of chapter 7 here, we'll dig into this to clarify the part that the law has in all of this.

[5 : 51] So in our text here this morning in verses 1 through 6, thanks Kevin for reading that for us here, Paul looks at the law and how it has dominion over a man.

He gives a physical example of the law of marriage. And then, by way of that example, he makes a spiritual connection, being married to Christ and bearing fruit to God.

So I've titled the message this morning, Married to Christ. So starting off in verse 1, Paul, he starts with a question.

Same thing he did in chapter 6. He's progressing through this and he does it by asking questions. And so he asks a question here as well.

And in order to answer this question, we need to look back, what did he say before he asked this question? And so, let's read verse 23 of chapter 6 and then verse 1 of chapter 7.

[7 : 15] It says, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Or do you not know, brethren, for I speak to those who know the law, that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

So he makes two statements there in verse 23 of chapter 6. Of all, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Two opposites. We have wages on the one hand and a free gift in the other. So the wages of sin is death.

We know that to be true. God, back in Genesis, he commanded Adam to not eat of the tree in the middle of the garden.

For the day that he would eat thereof, he would surely die. And as we are familiar with the story, we know that Adam disobeyed.

[8 : 24] He did make the choice to eat of that fruit. And he did, in fact, die. He died spiritually that very day. And then later on, physical death came about as well.

And so that still, it holds true for us today as well. If we live in sin, if we choose to sin, we have our reward. Sin leads to sin and we can see death is still all around us.

People are dying. We all are going to die eventually. But there is a way of escape from death.

Free gift. The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Eternal life means no death.

does not mean that we get out of the physical death. That does happen, but there is no spiritual death. We are alive.

- [9 : 29] And then in verse 1, chapter 7, Or do you not know, brethren, that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? It's a question raised.
- Paul addresses his brethren in this question. And he adds in there in brackets, For I know, for I speak to those who know the law.
- Dressing here. He's writing this letter to the church in Rome. Is he speaking to the Gentiles? There will be many Gentiles in Rome, right?
- But was the law given to the Gentiles? He says, For those who know the law. We know that the law was not given to the Gentiles. It was given to the Jews.
- Gentiles did not know the law. And so he's addressing the Jews here. Paul was a Jew. And in fact, he'd been part of the group known as the Pharisees.
- [10 : 38] The group who held to the law more strictly than anyone else did. So what law is he talking about here?
- He speaks that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. What law are we talking about? Scripture talks a lot about law.
- To try to understand it better, men have broken down the laws in Scripture. We've broken them down into three categories.
- We have a civil law, there's a ceremonial law, and a moral law. Civil laws, they're what we would call the laws of the land, rules that govern a country.
- They regulate society so men can live at peace with one another. And so some examples would be laws concerning property ownership, laws concerning borders, even laws regulating business transactions and so on.
- [12 : 00] And we see today every country has their own set of civil laws, guidelines to running a country, right? So next, ceremonial laws, they are laws that prescribe the ceremonies of religion.
- We flip back into the Old Testament, we see a lot of this, the whole sacrificial system that was given to the Jews, the offerings, the special feasts, the holidays, all examples of ceremonial law.
- Ceremonial laws, they don't bind us any longer now that Christ has come, but the principles behind them, the worship of a holy God, still do apply to us today as well.
- And lastly, they've got the category of moral laws, which are laws concerning right and wrong behavior, relationship between humans and God, and as well as between humans, between each other.
- Ten commandments are a very good example of moral law. Another one, the golden rule, do unto others as you would have them do to you.
- [13 : 28] It's a moral law. Do not swear, do not lie, also examples. Morals of right and wrong.
- So then in verse one here, what law is Paul speaking of? He's speaking of moral law.
- And we know that Gentiles, though they were not given the law, have moral laws as well. They do have a sense of right and wrong. We learned of that back in chapter two of Romans, verses 14 and 15.
- tell us, and we can bear witness, being Gentiles, we can bear witness that there are moral laws in our hearts, right?
- Although not having the law, doing the things that the law spells out, we do have a sense of right and wrong. Yet Paul knows that the Jews need to hear what he's going to be laying out here, what he's going to explain.
- [14 : 45] The law was given to the Jews by God, and they, to this day, they hold very strictly these laws were given by God to them.

So he's addressing the Jews. Jews. So what does the law do? It says here that it has dominion over a man. So what does dominion mean?

It means to have power or control over. So the law has dominion, it has power or control over a man. And it does, doesn't it?

It does. If you're not sure of this, that law has dominion over a man, you leave church today, you see a police officer try speeding past him.

See what happens. You'll see the law still does have dominion. That's an example of civil law, or is it?

[15 : 54] It's speeding. Is that, is it only a civil law or is it a law of matter of, you can see there's, there's an overlap there, right?

Moral law can overlap with a civil law. We know it's wrong to speed and all the, the country has laid guidelines on, on speed limits and so on, created a civil law, there's a moral law connected to it as well.

We are to obey the government, right? So there's many laws, this is only one example, there's many laws do overlap civil to moral and so on.

So how long does the law have dominion over a man? says here as long as he lives. So as long as a man lives. So it's until death.

Yet Paul, in chapter 6, verse 14, for sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace.

[17 : 18] So he's made the statement that we're not under the law. And yet here in chapter 7, verse 1, he says that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. So what is Paul saying here?

Let's look back at chapter 6, verse 3. Romans 6, verse 3. For do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death.

So we have died. We were baptized into Christ and into his death. The old man is no longer. He's gone.

He's dead. Therefore, the law no longer has dominion over us. Death has happened. So how can we clarify what this means?

If we go back to our text here in chapter 7, verses 2 and 3, Paul clarifies this for them, for the Jews. He lays out a physical example, an example they would understand.

[18 : 48] An example of the law. Let's reread verses 2 and 3 of chapter 7. For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law as long as he lives.

But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then, if while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress.

But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. He brings up an example to clarify it, to help understand this.

We see that a woman has a husband, and the law binds her to her husband as long as he's alive. It's a pretty straightforward concept, right?

We discussed that in Sunday school this morning as well. Then he brings up two different scenarios in this example. Scenario number one, a woman goes looking for greener grass.

[19 : 58] She marries another man while her husband is still alive. And in the second scenario, still the same woman, but she's still happily married to her first husband.

But then her husband dies, so the woman becomes lonely, and she marries another man. So two scenarios of her marrying another man, right? What does the law say about these two scenarios?

In the first scenario, the woman goes sneaking around on her husband, and she is labeled an adulteress. The law intervenes.

She is an adulteress. There is punishment. Why is she an adulteress? Because she was married to another. In the second scenario, still being married to the first husband, the husband dies.

And so it says, then the woman is free from the law of her husband. He has died, he is gone, she has been freed, she has every right to be remarried now. Being that the old man has died and we are no longer under sin or under the law, does this mean that laws don't apply to us anymore?

[21 : 23] The example we have here mentions adultery, the law of adultery. So is it okay for us to commit adultery if the laws don't apply to us anymore?

Is that what it's saying here? The answer is very clear in chapter 6. We look at verse 15 of chapter 6.

What then shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not. It is not a license to sin. So though our old man has died, the law isn't completely done away with.

It's not that it no longer has dominion over us but we'll address that in an upcoming message. Chapter 7 goes further into that.

Paul's purpose for this example it wasn't to focus on the marriage law but rather he's going at something deep that he wants to share.

[22 : 42] He brings that about in the next verse in verse 4. Therefore my brethren you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ that you may be married to another to him who was raised from the dead that we should bear fruit to God.

Therefore brethren I've given you a real life example so you know what I'm talking about. Now this is the meaning behind it.

This is what you need to apply to your life now. As believers in Christ here's the application you need to make. That's what Paul is pressing on his audience here.

Saying this brethren this is this is the important part. This is what you need to pay attention to to focus on. Therefore you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ that you may be married to another.

So we see here that the concept between death and remarriage and it's still here. We're still talking about it here.

[24 : 01] We've moved away from the physical. We're moving to the spiritual here. Become dead to. Become dead to the law.

Right? Matthew chapter five verse 17 reads do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

These are the words of Christ as he's teaching his disciples. So if the law then is not destroyed but rather has been fulfilled what have we become dead to?

We've become dead to the power that Satan had over us. He has been removed from the throne of our life. The throne in our hearts no longer has that control in our life.

We've died to the old man that we may be married to another to him who was raised from the dead. So as in the example where the husband first had to die before the woman could remarry we too must die we must die to the old man that we may be raised up in newness so that we can be married to someone else to him who was raised from the dead even to Christ Jesus our Savior.

[25 : 30] Why is that? That we should bear fruit to God. God instituted marriage when he brought Eve to Adam and when he had done this he blessed the couple and he said to them be fruitful and multiply.

Now he was of course speaking of physically being fruitful of having children to multiply and to fill the earth but in our text here now we have another marriage this is a spiritual marriage the message afterward is the same it's the same message be fruitful this time it's speaking of bearing fruit to God what kind of fruit is he speaking of Galatians chapter five lays out a good of that would come out of this union this marriage to Christ Galatians five verses 22 and 23 but the fruit of the spirit is love joy peace long suffering kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness self control against such there is no law listen to that against such there is no law ties in with what we had in

Romans the law no longer has dominion over us question that then comes up is are you married to Christ are you sold out to Christ are you bearing fruit are you bearing fruit to God bear to ask ourselves let's read a couple verses in John chapter 15 John chapter 15 verses 1 and 2 John chapter 15 1 and 2

I am the true vine and my father is the vine dresser every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away in every branch that bears fruit he prunes that it may bear more fruit let's be sure that we are bearing fruit today let's turn back to our text in Romans verses 5 and 6 for for when we were in the flesh the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death but now we have been delivered from the law having died to what we were held by so that we should serve in the newness of the letter you see our old sinful nature also produced fruit but it was fruit leading to death we were powerless to keep from sinning because satan was the master sitting on the throne in our life and he used the law to make sin even more desirable if the sign said wet paint do not touch we reached out to touch it just to make sure right but now we as all born again believers we have died to the law to serve in the newness of the spirit and not in the oldness of the letter or the law and as 2

Corinthians chapter 3 verse 6 the last part of it reveals but the spirit gives life in closing let's remember that the law only has dominion over us as long as we live and when we crucify the old man and we are baptized into Christ we have died to the old nature we have died to the law the law no longer has dominion over us and we are free to marry another him who was raised from the dead and the old sinful nature it is removed then and then we are finally able to bear fruit to God so let's be sure that our old man has died and that we are in fact married to Christ may we bear much fruit to

[31 : 16] God let's pray father in heaven we thank you for your grace mercy and love we thank you for the free gift you extended to all men that you extended even to us thank you for your plan of salvation for sending your son to die for us and raising him from the dead that we might be married to him may each one of us bear fruit in abundance to you and as we leave here and go about our ways may our fruit be evident to those around us throughout the coming week may you go with us and may your peace be upon us Jesus name we pray amen