

Right in God's Sight

Studies from the Book of Romans

Lesson 9 Romans 7:1–13

Romans 7:1–6 **Freed From the Law**

Paul began in chapter 6 with the first of a three part presentation on the believer's sanctification. In that chapter he stated that the believer is free from sin: when He died, we also died to sin's control over us. Yet God did not destroy the old nature; He gave the believer a new nature, which means that we continue to be susceptible to the temptations of the old nature. To illustrate the struggle between the two, Paul used the analogy of slavery to sin and its opposition to slavery to God.

Here in chapter 7 (the second part of his presentation), Paul will speak about the fact that the believer is also free from the law. Paul uses the same argument but with a different illustration, that of marriage. Just as death breaks the vows of marriage, so our death with Christ breaks the union with sin and the law.

Read Romans 7:1–13.

1. What principle does Paul make clear in verse 1?

Paul had earlier discussed this principle in detail: *"For he who has died has been freed from sin"* (6:7). He is free from the demands of the law; the law cannot condemn him. Paul now picks up the argument again here in chapter 7 by stating that physical death frees a person from the authority of the law. Paul's readers would have easily understood his meaning, both Jews and Gentiles alike.

2. What does Paul state about the binding power of the marriage vows? vv. 2–3
 - a. If a wife leaves her husband for another man what does she become?
 - b. If the woman's husband dies and she is widowed, what does the law state?

Note: Paul is not teaching on the subject of marriage in this text; he simply raises the issue of marriage to bolster the fact that the law applies only to the living.

Paul's point in raising the issue of marriage is to affirm that the laws governing marriage are null and void (canceled) when the union is broken by the death of one spouse. Just as death severs the union between a man and wife, so a believer's death to the old self severs the bond with the law, making him/her free to belong to another: Christ.

3. What, again, is the purpose of this new life in Christ? v. 4
 - a. In what way does Philippians 1:11 add to your understanding?

 - b. Look again at Galatians 5:22–23 to review the fruit that is to be evident from this newly formed relationship. List them again in the space below.

4. What was the result when you were *in the flesh*—controlled by your old sinful nature? Why? v. 5

Look closer . . . at the following summary and the result.

- The law was given to set the standard and to reveal that all men everywhere have failed to meet that standard. Result: we deserve death.
- Christ died in our place and we died with Him. Result: we are free from the penalty of death.
- We have died to the law and the guilt it produces by believing and accepting the gospel message. Result: we are delivered from sin *and* from the law!

Consider for a moment the “then” and “now” of your spiritual condition.

- **Then:** “You were slaves to sin” (Romans 6:20);
“In the flesh,” controlled by “sinful passions” (7:5)
- **Now:** “You have been set free from sin” (6:22);
“Delivered—set free—from the law” (7:6).
- Personal: Are you in any way a *spiritual adulterer*? In other words, have you truly let go of that which *you cannot keep*—demands of the law [works]—to gain what *you cannot lose*—a permanent relationship with Christ? Please explain.

5. Now that *you* have been freed from sin and the law, please share how you would like to *serve in the newness of the Spirit*. v. 6 (We'll examine this in greater detail in the coming weeks.)

Memory Verse: "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 Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Romans 7:6

Word Wealth:

Using the resources you have on hand (i.e., additional Bible translations, dictionary, Bible dictionary, concordance, etc.), write a definition for the words below.

brethren (7:1) _____

free (7:3) _____

held (7:6) _____

covet (7:7) _____

Romans 7:7–13

The Value of the Law

Paul's teaching that believers serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written law may have aroused some concerns and possible questions from the Jewish Christians in Rome. In order to avoid a misunderstanding, he will now clarify his remarks before moving on to teach about the Spirit-filled life in chapter 8.

Read Romans 7:7–13 for review.

Paul again turns his attention to an imaginary conversation with a fictional person who poses the question: "*What, then, is the law sin*" (v.7)? Paul's answer is "*Certainly not!*"

1. What did the law reveal to Paul? v. 7

The law is not sin; rather it reveals what sin is. The law names sin and makes us all accountable for it.

For group discussion . . .

What, according to Galatians 3:24–25, is the value of the law before individuals come to faith in Christ?

- According to these verses, after we have come to faith, what can be said of the law?

The law has the same value today as it did in Paul's day. No one comes to Christ by faith without a clear understanding that he or she is a sinner in need of a Savior.

2. With the law, what does sin do? Apart from the law, what happens to sin? v. 8

In verses 9–12, Paul is most likely setting himself as the example. The fact that Paul kept the law as a Pharisee before turning to Christ did not excuse him. Paul at one time believed himself to be “alive,” but the further he went toward obeying the law, the more he realized his sinfulness and the end result of that sin—death: *“The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me”* (v. 10 NRSV).

3. In your own words, contrast the effect of sin (v. 11) with that of the law (v. 12).
4. Since Paul's main point in vv. 7–12 is the value of the law, close your study today by taking a few minutes to look up the passages that point to the value of God's law to the Israelites. As you do, think about the value you place on God's Word and how you might take these truths into to your heart and life today.
 - Exodus 33:12–13
 - Psalm 119:47, 97
 - Deuteronomy 4:1–7; 29:9
 - Deuteronomy 4:9–10
 - Deuteronomy 11:18–28

“Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”
Psalm 119:11

My Romans Road

Listen . . . Learn . . . Live . . . God's Truth!

Take a look back at this week's lesson. Briefly recap what you learned this week and how you intend to live it out.

1. What lesson in your study became real to you this week?

2. How do you intend to apply this lesson to your daily life?

Memory Verse:

Write down what you learned about God from this week's memory verse.

Write out the verse from memory.

Prayer Request:

Write out your most earnest prayer request and lift it to the Lord.
