

VII

Free From the Law

ROMANS 7:1–6

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? 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. 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.

EPHESIANS 4:20–24

But that is not the way you learned Christ!—
²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

GALATIANS 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

READ | ROMANS 7:1–6

THINK ABOUT

Previously Paul has made it abundantly clear that observance of the Law does not lead to salvation. There is nothing wrong with the Law, but none of us can keep it as we are all sinful.

Followers of Jesus no longer live under the Mosaic Law as the rule of law in our lives. It is not that the Law is bad, but that sin is “aroused by the law.” In these verses, Paul uses the illustration of marriage. The law is binding only as long as our husband or wife lives (v. 1). Upon death, a spouse is free to remarry.

Similarly, followers of Jesus “have died to the law” (v. 4). We now serve God “not under the old written code, but in the new life of the Spirit” (v. 6).

APPLY

Although authentic followers of Jesus are saved by grace “apart from the works of the Law,” many of us appear to be legalistic in viewing our own Christian life and the lives of others. These judgmental and legalistic tendencies take the joy out of the Christian life and hold us “captive” (v. 6).

The Holy Spirit brings freedom (not license). As we follow Jesus, we experience a “new life.” So this week, live in conscious dependence of the Spirit rather than trying to judge yourself and others by rules and regulations.

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ASK

Why is it that many couples seem to struggle to keep their commitment “until death we do part”? What is God’s intention for marriage?

What advice would you give to a couple whose marriage is in danger of falling apart?

Discuss the differences between serving God “under the old written code” as opposed to living the Christian life “in the new life of the Spirit” (v. 6).

PRAY

Help me to live the new life of the Spirit.

Forgive me, Lord, when I am judgmental of others.



“Wounded for Me” — *Ovens*

