

Romans 7:1-13

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An Illustration from Marriage

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But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man. (Rom 7:3b)



Our Relationship to the Law

Romans 7:4

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⁴So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.

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There are some differing points of view as to who or what is meant by the first husband.

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“Contrary to the confusing interpretations of some commentators, the apostle is not presenting a complex allegory, or an allegory of any kind. He is simply making an analogy to marriage law to illustrate the single point he has just mentioned, namely, that no law has jurisdiction over a person after he is dead.” [John MacArthur]



“The analogy calls for the death of the law, but Paul refuses to say that. He changes the structure and makes them dead to the law as the husband (6:3-6)” [A. T. Robertson]

“Believers are made dead to the law as the wife is maritally dead--killed in respect of the marriage relation by her husband’s death.” [Kenneth S. Wuest]

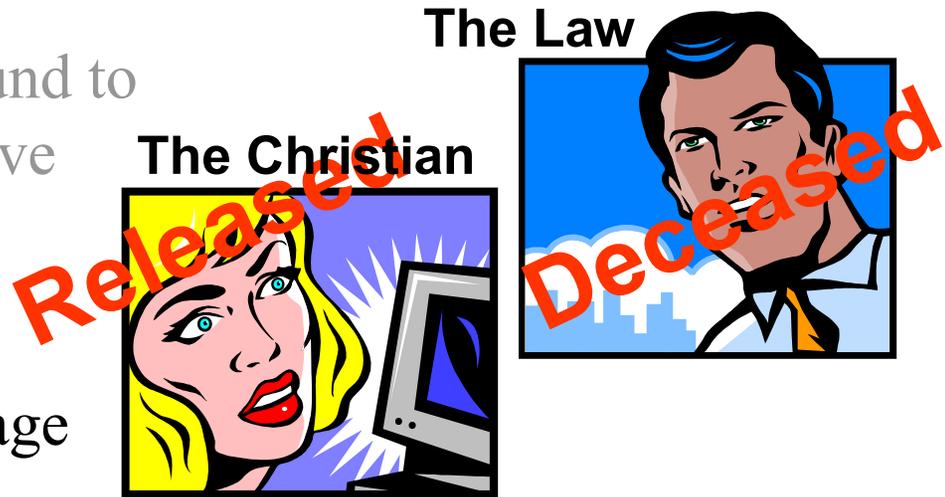
other, to him who was

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For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God.

Galatians 2:19

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Bearing Fruit for God

Romans 7:4

- We died to the law that we might bear fruit to God (v.4)
- When we were in the flesh, we bore fruit for death (v.5)
- The Christian life is to be a fruitful life (Jn 15:4,5,8,16; Gal 5:22, Eph 5:9, etc)
- The fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) is contrasted with the works of the flesh (Gal 5:19-21)
 - Fruit is the natural issue of life (also Mt 7:16-18; 12:33-35)

Fruit for Death

Romans 7:5

- How is it that when we were in the flesh, we bore fruit for death (v.5)?
 - Isn't fruit the issue of life?
- The phrase “in the flesh” (or, “controlled by the sinful nature,” NIV) seems to refer to the state of a lost person
 - *and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (Rom 8:8)*
 - *However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. (Rom 8:9)*
- I believe “fruit for death” is the issue of the unregenerate life (in the flesh)

The Old Way and The New Way

Romans 7:6

- We have died to what once bound us
- We have been released from the law
- We serve in the new way of the Spirit, not in the old way of the letter (cf. 2Cor 3:6)
 - *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law (Gal 5:18)*
 - The Tree of Life, not...
 - The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

“Do you realize that the conduct of many a non-Christian is governed by the principle of right and wrong? Wherein does the Christian differ from the non-Christian if the same principle governs them both?”

--Watchman Nee

The Law's Purpose

Romans 7:7

- ◉ *“I would not have known what sin was except through the law”*
 - Through the law comes the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20, NASB)
 - The law was added so that the trespass might increase (Rom 5:20)
 - The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ (Gal 3:24)
- ◉ The law teaches us more than we would have otherwise known about each and every sin
 - The economy of the knowledge of good and evil

The Law's Effect

Romans 7:8

- ⊖ *But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. (v.8a)*
 - Our knowledge of coveting causes the power of sin within us to produce in us covetous desires
 - It's not just God's law, but any law that does this
 - Wet Paint, Keep Off the Grass, No Trespassing
 - 55 MPH, No U-Turn
- ⊖ *For apart from law, sin is dead. (v.8b)*
 - This is why we need to die to the law
 - If we are dead to the law, sin is not empowered
 - ***Far from producing a holy life, law has quite the opposite effect!***

Death from the Law

Romans 7:9-10

☉ *Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died.*

- How could Paul have been alive apart from the law?
 - Probably in the same sense that he “bore fruit for death” (v.5)
 - When he was “in the flesh,” he was alive apart from the law
 - When he learned the law, sin was energized and defeated him

☉ *I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.*

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The Deceitfulness of Sin

Romans 7:11

- ⊙ *For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment...*
 - Parallel thought to verse 8
 - The power of sin (noun) creates within us the desire to commit sins (verbs)
- ⊙ *...deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.*
 - In what ways does sin deceive us?
 - The deceitfulness of wealth (Mt 13:22; Mk 4:19)
 - The deceitfulness of sin (Heb 3:13)

Conclusion

Romans 7:12-13

- *So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.*
 - The law is holy, but it can't make us holy!
 - "...you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it." (Acts 7:53)
 - "Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?" (Acts 15:10)
- *Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.*

Conclusion

Romans 7:12-13

But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted. 1 Tim. 1:8-11

The Laws Of Romans

- ⦿ Law of faith (v.3:27)
- ⦿ Law of marriage (v.7:2)
- ⦿ Law of God (v.7:22,25; 8:7)
- ⦿ Law of my mind (v.7:23)
- ⦿ Law of sin (v.7:23,25)
- ⦿ Law of the Spirit of life (v.8:2)
- ⦿ Law of sin and death (v.8:2)
- ⦿ Law of righteousness (v.9:31)

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