

Title: A New Spirit for the New Year

Passage: Romans 7: 1-12

Summary:

I. You Died to the Law. (v.1-3)

II. Serve in the New Spirit. (v.4-6)

III. What Good is the Law? (v.7-12)

Key Truths:

- The secret of contentment is Christ in me where I am.
- Every person must be a widow to the Law before being joined to Christ. Marriage to the Law results in fruitlessness. But marriage with Christ produces life / fruit for God's glory!
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not us giving our heart to God but rather the Spirit giving us a new heart for God.
- Legalism has no place among the people of God. We serve out of joy because of what Christ has done.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
 - What role does God's written law play in a Christian's life?
 - What does it mean to be a new person in Christ?
 - What can you do this week to build your living relationship with Christ instead of merely following the rules?
 - What next steps will you take in response to the truths you heard or see?
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Introduction

Question: Will you live each day in 2024 under the law or in Christ?

- In Christ, you have died to the law. So serve God in the Spirit. Your enemy is not God's law but your own sin.

Context of Passage:

- Romans 6: The Christian has died to sin
- Romans 7: written to Christian Jews (if you have died to sin, you have died to the law)

- Romans 8: To all (Jews and Gentiles), because of Christ, we live in the newness of the Spirit.

Passage:

Romans 7:1-12

“Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is master over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman has been bound by law to her husband while he is living, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

So, my brothers, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were constrained, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! Rather, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law. For I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “YOU SHALL NOT COVET.” But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, worked out in me coveting of every kind. For apart from the Law sin is dead. Now I was once alive apart from the Law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; and this commandment, which was to lead to life, was found to lead to death for me. For sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.”

EXPOSITION

I. YOU DIED TO THE LAW (v. 1-3)

Romans 7:1

Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is master over a person as long as he lives?

- “brothers” = Jews

- “for those who know the law” = the Law given at Mount Sinai

Illustration of Marriage

Romans 7:2-3

For the married woman has been bound by law to her husband while he is living, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

Basic assumption: marriage is for life.

Application Thoughts

For single people:

- Be wise in who you marry
- It is with whom you walk through life with
 - Not a cute thing to take lightly.

For married people:

- It is for life.
 - Do not tease about thinking about different circumstances

The secret of contentment is Christ in me where I am.

Tension: Married to the law or to Christ?

- There is no mix
 - One cannot be married to the law and relate to Christ.
- One must fully live under the grace and love of Christ and not be burdened under the Law.

II. SERVE IN THE NEW SPIRIT (v. 4-6)

- How we are able to tend to God’s glory the most? By living under the new spirit of Christ.
- Paul’s greatest concern? Bearing fruit for God and serving in newness of the spirit
 - The Law binds people in their sin, a great barrier to bearing fruit

Romans 7:4

“So, my brothers, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.”

- When did you die?
 - When you were born again in Christ.
 - Christ died for you = you died in Him

Colossians 3:3

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

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.

- every person must be a widow to the Law before joining to Christ.
 - Marriage to the Law resulted in fruitlessness.
 - But marriage with Christ produces life / fruitful for God’s glory!

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Philippians 1:11

filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Romans 7:5

“For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.”

- The Law aroused sinful passions
- The Law brought only despair and destruction

Romans 7:6

“But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were constrained, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.”

- Great change:
 - newness of spirit = redeemed life in Christ.
 - Liberation from the Law, which previously enslaved you.

- Contrast: newness of spirit vs. oldness of the letter

Jeremiah 31:33

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

- The Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - Not us giving our heart to God
 - But rather the Spirit giving us a new heart for God.
- Legalism has no place among the people of God.
 - We serve out of joy because of what Christ has done.

III. WHAT GOOD IS THE LAW? (v. 7-12)

- Your enemy is not the Law but your sin.

Romans 7:7

“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! Rather, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law. For I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “YOU SHALL NOT COVET.””

- The Law merely shows the reality of sin within us
 - but the Law provides no cure.

Acts 6-7 (Story of Stephen)

Acts 6:8, 15

And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people...And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Acts 8:1

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

- Contrast: Paul coveted what Stephen had
 - Result of Paul’s coveting = persecution of the church.

Romans 7:8

“But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, worked out in me coveting of every kind. For apart from the Law sin is dead.”

- There is no joy from following the Law.

Romans 7:9

“Now I was once alive apart from the Law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died;”

- Living apart from the Law, we have a perception of deception of self-peace.
- “sin revived and I died”
 - But with the Law, we realize instead the reality of sin in our hearts.

Romans 7:10

“and this commandment, which was to lead to life, was found to lead to death for me.”

- Through the Law, we realize our failures.

Romans 7:11

“For sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.”

- Sin only deceives and kills. It only brings death.

John 10:10a

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

Romans 7:12

“So, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.”

- The Law has a holy and special purpose that points us to our need for the Savior.

What to do? Turn to Jesus!

Romans 7:24–8:1

“Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”