

Romans – Chapter 7

Summary of Previous Chapter

- *We no longer live in sin if we have died with Christ*
- *The moment our new life began was when we were 'buried' in baptism*
- *Sin doesn't reign and have dominion over us because we are under grace*
- *We once were slaves to sin, but now we are slaves to righteousness*
- *God's free gift is eternal life in Christ Jesus*

Chapter 7: Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak

Words to highlight: **Law & Sin**

Dying with Christ – released from the law (1-4)

¹Or 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? ²For 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. ³Accordingly, 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.

⁴Likewise, 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.

We have been set free from the law by dying with Christ. What does it mean to die with Christ? See the following verses:

- **Romans 6:6**
- **Galatians 2:20**
- **Colossians 2:20-21**

Old way - flesh; New way - Spirit (5-6)

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.

We now serve “In the new way of the Spirit” (vs 6). How is it new and different?

Sin seizes an opportunity (7-12)

⁷ What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.

⁹ I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰ The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

The law was meant to bring life:

Deuteronomy 5:33 - You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess.

Instead, what did the law do (vss 9-11)?

Was the law the problem?

Law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh (13-14)

¹³ Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.

What does Paul mean by saying, “I am of the flesh” (vs 14)?

Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak (15-20)

¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

Why don't we do what we want to do? What stops us?

Why does Paul say, “It is no longer I who do it [sin]” in vs 20? Is he saying that he is not responsible for his sin?

Law of God vs Law of Sin (21-25)

²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Paul talks about a ‘war’ going on inside him (vs 23). What is the war between? How do we win this war?

Questions

How would we summarise this chapter?

What can I apply from what I have learnt? How does this chapter change my choices and behaviour?

What is something I can pray for based on this text?