**Lesson 16: You Are Free From the Law!**

Text: Romans 7:1-6

**Introduction**

It is obvious that the primary focus of Romans 7 is the law, since Paul refers to it twenty-three times in this chapter alone! He elaborates on some of the comments he has made regarding the law (Romans 3:19-20, 27-28, 4:13, 5:20). Not only are believers free from the ruling power of sin (Romans 6), they are likewise free from the rule of the law. This was a very important matter to discuss with the believers in Rome. Many of them were Jewish and had strictly adhered to the law since childhood. Others were God-fearing Gentiles who had left paganism to submit themselves to the law. They struggled to accept the truth that they were free from the law upon trusting Christ.

Justification by faith alone states that it is impossible to be declared right with God by virtue of keeping the law. It is impossible! The sinful nature within each of us renders it impossible. In this chapter, Paul explains that just as justification does not come by adherence to the law, neither does sanctification. This raises several issues for all believers. What role does the law have? How will believers live right if they are no longer subject to the law? Paul addresses these matters head-on. I believe by the end of our study of chapter 7, you will agree that the law is NOT the problem. In this particular lesson, we will discover why you must be free from the rule of the law.

1. **The believer is free from the rule of the law because of his or her union with Christ.** 
   1. The law has dominion (rule) over an unregenerate man as long as he is alive. (v. 1)
   2. The law reveals that man does not meet God’s standards of holy living.
   3. The rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16-22 believed he conformed to God’s laws. When Jesus used the law to probe deeper, the young man went away sad because he was guilty of covetousness. He needed a relationship with Christ, but remained under the rule of the law.
   4. “A person’s bondage to the law must be severed in order that he or she may be put into a new relationship with Christ” (Douglas Moo).
2. **Paul used marriage to illustrate the rule of the law. (v. 2-4)** 
   1. Remember, his main point is about the rule of the law. His illustration does not account for the entire biblical teaching regarding marriage. Let’s stick with Paul’s focus as we proceed.
   2. A wife is bound by law to her husband as long as they are alive. (v. 2a)
   3. If the husband dies, she is free to remarry. (v. 2b-3) “Marriage is a physical union and can only be broken by a physical cause” (Warren Wiersbe).
   4. In verse 4, Paul makes his point regarding the believer and the law. The wife represents the believer, the old husband represents the law, and the new husband represents Christ.
      1. He does not say that the law died. In fact, it is still very much alive. Instead, the believer died! We considered this truth in chapter 6.
      2. “It appears that Paul has confused his illustration, but he has not….If the wife died in the illustration, the only way she could marry again would be to come back from the dead. But that is exactly what Paul wants to teach! When we trusted Christ, we died to the law; but in Christ, we arose from the dead and now are ‘married’ (united) to Christ to live a new kind of life!” (Warren Wiersbe).
      3. “Christians, in dying with Christ, have suffered a death that severs their bondage to the law and that makes possible their new relationship with Jesus Christ” (Douglas Moo).
   5. Just as you have died with reference to sin (6:2), you have also died with reference to the law (7:4).
   6. You died with reference to the law “by the body of Christ” (v. 4a). This refers to our union with the death of Christ on the cross. Remember, we are crucified with Christ to have new life!
   7. Since we have new life, we are free to be married to another (v. 4b). We are blessed to be united with Christ, the One who rose from the dead.
   8. Marriage to the law was cruel! In your flesh, you could never please such a demanding husband. The law offers no assistance in meeting the standards.
   9. Now you are under the authority of Christ! He is loving and compassionate. He gives grace (assistance, help) to meet His expectations. Being under His authority does not grant liberty to live in sin (Romans 6). It grants the desire and grace to grow and please God! You can live a fruitful life in the power of grace.
3. **The law only brings out the worst in us. (v. 5)** 
   1. When we were living “in the flesh,” we were filled with sinful desires (v. 5a). The word *motions* refers to our sinful passions.
   2. Rather than being controlled or curbed by the law, they are aroused by the law! (v. 5b) When you tell a child not to do something he or she naturally WANTS to do it. There is something in you that makes you want to touch the freshly painted bench even though the sign plainly reads, “Caution: Wet paint.” We have a natural appetite for the forbidden! That is the *motions of sins* at work in us. We tend to pursue them even down destructive paths. Thus, the law produces sin and death.
   3. Paul returns to the truth that we have been delivered from the law. (v. 6)
      1. We are dead to the law that we might have new life by the Spirit of God.
      2. Paul’s teaching here gives rise to questions that he will address in the remaining part of the chapter. We will pause here to state the point and make application.
4. **Central Idea: Paul taught that you must be free from the law because it could only bring forth sin and death.**
5. **Application: You must be free from the law because it can only bring forth sin and death.** 
   1. You are free from the rule of the law based on your union with Christ.
   2. I have used the plural pronoun “we” throughout this lesson for the ease of referring to believers. You must make sure that you legitimately belong to that group. If you have never been born again, you need to be today! Please speak with your Sunday school teacher or another faithful Christian in the class about your spiritual condition. It will not change without Christ.
   3. We must be careful to emphasize grace. The only way a believer can grow and please the Lord is in the power of Christ Jesus, the risen Lord. It is good to have standards, but we must not make them the essence of Christianity. Holy living is the product of a relationship with Christ, not human energy. We need to help believers understand this truth lest we produce pretenders or rebels.
   4. As a believer, make sure that you are under the loving authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. You were not saved to live under the dominion of sin or the law. You are free to live for Christ. You have died that you might live! It is Christ who lives in you (Galatians 2:20).
   5. Use the law the way Jesus used the law. The law is a schoolmaster to bring others to Christ (Galatians 3:24).
   6. Since Jesus lives forever and you have eternal life, you are in a relationship that will never end! Praise the Lord!

**Conclusion**

There had to be death for a new relationship to begin. The moment you repented and placed faith in Christ you died to the law and entered into a relationship with Christ. That is not grounds for lawless living, but rather Christlike living. You are free from the demands of the law to live for Christ!