

Raised To Life

Live Like You Were Dying

Romans 7:1-6

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I. The Power of the Law (*Romans 7:4*)

- a. Paul addresses the “power of the law” (v. 7)
- b. The law was important to Jewish people.
 - i. The law was given to Moses by God on Mt. Sinai.
 - ii. There was a great attachment and commitment to the Law.
- c. The Purpose: The children of Israel were struggling to follow God – so God made it clear.
 - i. Humanity kept stepping over the boundaries. The law set them in place.
 - ii. The law brought insight into how we have rebelled and rejected God.
 - iii. *“Apart from this fundamental insight into human nature it is impossible to understand.”¹*
- d. Every time Paul has mentioned the law, it has been in a negative way.
 - i. The law reveals sin, not salvation (3:20); it brings wrath, not grace (4:15).
 - ii. The law shows us how far we are from God - 613 laws.
- e. “Dying to the law” was offensive. The Jews regarded it as “perfect, reviving the soul...more precious than gold...sweeter than honey...” (Psalm 19), and “blessed are those whose way is blameless who walk in the law of the Lord.” (Psalm 119)
- f. PROBLEM: The law cannot justify a person – it can’t save us.
 - i. “Possessing the law” does not justify you; it only obligates to you and places on you a yoke of bondage/slavery (Galatians 5:1).
 - ii. No one has ever obeyed all the laws; we can’t perform to that bar.
- g. Our struggle – habitual sin (Romans 7:15-20).
 - i. Big misconception about Christianity: struggle.
 - ii. Following Jesus is the way out: instantly justifies us (makes us right with God) and progressively sanctifies (the **process** of “becoming” Christlike).

II. Death: Only Way Out *“The law applies only when you are living” (Romans 7:1)*

- a. We were born sinners – this is our inheritance (Romans 5:12).
- b. Paul’s example: marriage.
 - i. Marriage is the strongest relational covenant that we have in our society.
 - ii. The Bible defines marriage as a sacrificial commitment for the good of the other. It is more about action than emotion (Ephesians 5:25, Genesis 2:24).

¹ Mounce, R. H. (1995). *Romans* (Vol. 27, p. 162). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

- iii. Paul's point: we have entered into the wrong relationship – SIN.
- c. Jesus leads us to the way out – death.
- d. What does Paul mean by “death?”
 - i. This is dying to our ourselves – our old nature controlled by sin.
 - ii. It is a spiritual death – dying to the sinful nature that is controlling us.
- e. We cannot die on our own. We need Jesus!
- f. How do we die with Christ?
 - i. Surrender to Him – “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me...if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose” (Galatians 2:20-21)
 - ii. The analogy of marriage is surrender to become one.

III. New Life in the Spirit *“new way of living in the Spirit” (Romans 7:6)*

- a. Death affords the opportunity for a NEW beginning.
- b. Our “new life” is a life in the Spirit.
- c. Letter of the law versus life in the Spirit.
- d. The Spirit in us is evidence of our NEW LIFE (Romans 8:16).
- e. What does the Holy Spirit do?
 - i. Helper, empowers us, shows us how to pray, regenerates us, reveals Christ to us and in us, transforms us into the image of Christ, comforts us, is an Advocate for us, guides us in all truth, convicts us of sin, ...
 - ii. “Seals us...as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)
 - iii. GUIDE: “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.” (John 16:12, 13)
- f. The only way to follow God is by our hearts being transformed through the work of the Holy Spirit – His Spirit in us!
- g. As we “serve God,” we are strengthened and empowered for the “full life” that Jesus is calling us to (John 10:10).

Reflection Questions:

- Are we living empowered by the Holy Spirit or by enforcing the law?
- Have I given up on the “habitual sins” in my life? What is God speaking to me?
- Where is Jesus leading me to die in order that I might live? What needs to die in me?
- Have I died with Christ? Am I walking empowered by His Spirit?

WAYS TO RESPOND			
			
COMMUNION	PRAY	JOURNAL	PRAYER WALLS
Visit stations to partake of the bread and cup.	Pray with your neighbor or one of our prayer teams.	Write out a prayer or journal a reflection.	Write prayer requests on the prayer walls.