

I. Introduction:

- A. Why do you experience such defeat in your Christian life?
- B. Can the law help?

II. Death releases you from the law. v. 1-3 .

- A. The principle stated: The law has dominion over a person only when he is alive. v. 1
- B. The principle illustrated: A widow is no longer bound to her dead husband. v. 2-3
- C. What does this text say about marriage, divorce and remarriage?
 - 1. Paul uses marriage as an illustration.
 - 2. He reminds us that death is the only way a marriage relationship can end without violating God's law. Mk. 10:11-12 Lu. 20:33-34 I Ti. 5:14 I Co. 7:39
 - 3. Other texts address situations in which one party destroys the marriage bond through unfaithfulness or abandonment. Mt. 5:31-32 19:3-13 I Co. 7:10-15

III. Your obligation to the law has ended and you are united to Christ. v. 4

- A. How does Paul's example of death and remarriage portray our situation?
 - 1. Don't try to turn Paul's illustration into an allegory.
 - 2. Paul's point is simply that a death ends our obligation under the law, setting us free to be united to Christ.
 - 3. Why is marriage a good picture of our change in status?
- B. You died to the law, from which you are now free. Gal. 2:19-20
 - 1. Of what law does Paul speak? 2:14-16 1:32
 - a. Paul is speaking of God's law under the dominion of which every person is born, of which the Mosaic law is the supreme example.
 - b. Even those who have no written law from God, know His law in their hearts.
 - 2. When your old self died in union with Christ, your obligation to the law ended.
 - 3. This death was not something you did. Rather it was done to you. 6:3-4,8
 - 4. You were made to die to the law, not that you might be unattached, but that you might be joined to another.
- C. Now you are married to Christ.
 - 1. Now you are under Christ's headship instead of that of the law.
 - 2. Your relationship with Christ is permanent and secure, because He has died once and for all never to die again. 6:9-10
 - 3. Marriage is a beautiful picture of your relationship to the Lord. Eph. 5:22-33 II Co. 11:2 Song of Solomon Rev. 19:7f Isa. 62:5
- D. God's ultimate purpose in wedding us to Christ is that we may bear fruit. v. 4b 6:22 John 15:1f Gal. 5:22f Eph. 2:10 Mt. 7:17 Ti. 2:14
 - 1. This is a powerful refutation of the accusation of 6:15.
 - 2. Salvation brings about a great transformation.
 - 3. We bear fruit only as we are in union with Him. John 15:5
 - 4. Of what does this fruit consist? Ga. 5:22-23 Eph. 2:10

IV. You must be released from the law before you can bear spiritual fruit. v. 5-6

- A. The law is impotent to produce spiritual fruit in fleshly people. v. 5**
1. What does it mean to be *in the flesh*? 7:18,25 8:7-8 13:14
 2. Those under the law mistakenly believe law can make them righteous. 3:20
 3. The law actually stimulates sin in fleshly people. 5:20 7:7-8
The fault is not with the law. 7:12-13
- B. But now, in the Spirit, we can fruitfully serve God. v. 6 v. 4b**
1. We had to be released from the law before we could bear fruit for righteousness.
 2. Now that we are united to our new husband, Christ, we are fruitful (give birth).
 3. We serve God in newness of the Spirit, not oldness of the letter. II Co. 3:6
 4. Everything has changed under grace. Mt. 9:16-17 II Co. 5:17
 - a. You are empowered by the Holy Spirit to produce fruit. . Phil. 2:12-13
 - b. God's standards are internalized. 8:4 Je. 31:31-34 Ez. 36:26-27 11:19 Ps. 40:8
- C. Application: The law can't produce righteousness in us. Only Christ can.**
1. Mere morality (law) will not make people good, and it may make them worse.
 2. What about the "civil use of the law" to restrain sin? 13:3f
 3. People need the gospel, not a bunch of rules they can't keep.
 4. Sanctification by the law is as impossible as was justification by law.
 - a. You will not grow by struggling to keep the law by the power of your flesh.
 - b. When you so stumble, don't look to the law as the remedy.
 5. The key to sanctification is understanding your marriage union with Christ.
 6. Does this mean the law has no place in the life of a Christian? Mt. 5:17-19
 - a. We are not done with the law in every sense. 8:4 Ga. 5:13
 - b. The law still faithfully reveals God's character and teaches the holiness he expects from his people. 13:8-10 I Co. 7:19 I Jo. 2:3-4
 - c. Now God's law is your delight. Ps. 19:10,7 119:97,18,165 Jo. 14:15

V. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions for family worship

1. How is the Christian like a woman whose first (tyrannical) husband has died? v. 1-3
2. How were you released from dominion to the law? v. 4a
3. Why did God set you free from law? v. 4b
4. Why can't the law produce good works in unspiritual people? v. 5
5. How does the law actually stimulate sin in some people? v. 5
6. How does our relationship with Christ enable us to produce spiritual fruit? v. 6
7. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our service to God? v. 6
8. Why is it worthless to preach mere morality?
9. How can Christians be guilty of putting themselves under law in a wrong sense?
What should you do if this happens to you?
10. Why are the following statements false?
 - a. Romans 7 explains all we need to know about marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
 - b. While justification is by grace, sanctification comes through obedience to the law.
 - c. When you stumble in your Christian life the key to recovery is striving harder to obey God's commandments.
 - d. Now that we are under grace, the law has no real importance in our lives.
 - e. Your worthiness to participate in communion depends upon how well you have kept God's law this week.
 - f. The real mark of spirituality is how much time one spends in prayer and Bible study.
 - h. The teaching of the ten commandments is certain to improve the behavior of our kids.