

1) Experiential truth (Romans 7:1)

Those who have lived under the law experienced the law's harsh rule over them.

[G, connects back to Romans 6:14] ¹ [Or] don't you know [PAI] brothers and sisters,
[G] Since [C] I am speaking [PAI] to those who know [PAP] *the law*,
[E] that *the law* rules over [PAI] someone as long as he lives [PAI]?

2) Biblical illustration (Romans 7:2-3)

Just like marriage is for life, so too, bondage to the law is only broken by death.

[G, this illustrates the truth in Romans 7:1] ² For example,

[−] a married woman is legally bound [RPI] to her husband
[C] while he lives/is living [PAP].

[+] But [C?] if her husband dies [AAS],
[E] she is released [RPI] [from *the law* regarding the husband].

[P] ³ So then,

[−] [C?] if she is married [AMS] to another man while her husband is living [PAP],
[E] she will be called [FAI] an adulteress.

[+] But [C?] if her husband dies [AAS],
[E] she is [PAI] free [from that law].

[C] Then, if/Though she is married [AMP] to another man,
[E] she is [PAN] not an adulteress.

3) Spiritual application (Romans 7:4-5)

You died with Christ to the letter of the law, that you may live in newness of the Spirit, bearing fruit.

[I', signals the shift from illustration to application] ⁴ Therefore, my brothers and sisters,
[C] you also were put to death [API] in relation to *the law* [through *the body of Christ*]
[E] [so that you may belong [AMN] to another].

[M] You belong to him who was raised [APP] [from *the dead*]

[Ed] in order that we may bear fruit [AAS] for God.

[G] ⁵ For a.) [T, introduces the time when we were slaves to the law over being freed] when

1.) we were [IAI] [in *the flesh*],

2.) the sinful passions aroused [through *the law*] were working [IMI] [in us]
[to bear fruit [AAN] for *death*].

b.) [A] ⁶ But now we have been released [API] [from *the law*],

[C] since we have died to what [AAP] [held us [IPI]],

[E] so that we may serve [PAN]

[+] [in the newness of *the Spirit*]

[−] and [not *in* the old letter of *the law*].

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Romans 7:1-6

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

- a) 1) Experiential truth: Those who have lived under the law experienced the law's harsh rule over them (Romans 7:1).
 - 2) Biblical illustration: Just like marriage is for life, so too, bondage to the law is for life, it can only be broken by death (Romans 7:2-3).
 - 3) Spiritual application: You died with Christ to the letter of the law, that you may live in newness of the Spirit, bearing fruit (Romans 7:4-6).
- b) I identified discourse – and so considered the grammar/syntax analysis (especially the verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions), flow of ideas (An experiential truth, illustrated Biblically, applied spiritually), as well as repetitions (law, life, death), keywords (rules over, released, belong, held, serve), and contrasts (life/death – grace over law, the body of Christ/the flesh – Christ over Adam, bound/free – slave to sin over freed to serve, bear fruit/sinful passions – the fruit of faith over the fruit of sin, the newness of the Spirit/the old letter of the law – transformational liberty over religious legalism), and the key verse (Romans 7:6, we have been released from the old letter of the law to serve in newness of the Spirit).
- c) Those who were once bound to the law have died with Christ and have been freed to bear fruit, serving God in the newness of the Spirit.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

- a) 1) In Romans 6:15-23, Paul made the point that believers are freed from sin, but are not free to sin, because they are enslaved to God, which leads to progressive sanctification and eternal life. In Romans 7:1-6, Paul extends his argument extending the theme of freedom from sin to freedom from the law, and continuing from the theme of justification to the theme of sanctification, bearing fruit enabled by the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) In Romans 7:1-6, explains that believers are freed from bondage to the law and are enabled by the Holy Spirit. In Romans 7:7-25, Paul explains the right use of the law, and in Romans 8, he clarifies the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.
- b) The church in Rome was comprised of both Jewish and Gentile believers. Whether the law still held salvific or sanctific significance was hotly debated. In Romans 7:1, Paul addresses those who know the law, making the point that they are no longer bound by the law.
- c) The Old Testament implies that marriage ends at death through laws on remarriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10, Ruth 1:8-9) and verses showing that the dead no longer participate in earthly affairs (Job 7:9-10, Ecclesiastes 9:5-6). Jesus explicitly confirms this in the New Testament, stating that there is no marriage in the resurrection (Matthew 22:30). Paul uses this Jewish understanding of marriage to answer the question that believers are not bound by the law in Romans 7:1.
- d) Romans 7:1-6 does not cite any other Scripture. However it clearly alludes to a thematic understanding of Old Testament texts such as: Numbers 30:9, where widow is free from her husband's authority. Deuteronomy 24:1-4, which discusses remarriage after divorce, indirectly reinforcing the idea that death ends a marriage. And Genesis 2:24, which is the foundational marriage principle, though it does not explicitly mention death. Paul uses this allusion to marriage as an illustration in Romans 7:2-3 to show that believers are no longer bound under the law.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

Believers have died with Christ to the law and are now freed to bear fruit for God in newness of the Spirit.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

There is a simple reference to the gospel in Romans 7:4, Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you also were put to death in relation to the law through the body of Christ so that you may belong to another. You belong to him who was raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. Believers have been united to the death of Christ, and so have been put to death in relation to the law. We go on to live transformed lives because we belong to the One who lives.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

Freely live a Spirit-empowered life, bearing fruit for God, because you are dead to the law but alive in Christ.

6. What applications will you make? a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

- a) 1) Embrace Your Freedom in Christ: Recognize that you are no longer bound by the law but are free to live in the newness of the Spirit. Let this truth transform your identity and daily walk with God.
 - 2) Bear Fruit for God: Actively seek to live a life that bears spiritual fruit as evidence of your union with Christ.
 - 3) Serve in the Spirit: Shift your focus from religious legalism to serving God in the power of the Spirit. Allow the Spirit to guide your actions, decisions, and relationships.
- b) 1) Recognize Your Bondage to Sin: Understand that without Christ, you are bound by sin and the law, which leads to death. Acknowledge your need for a Savior.
- 2) Turn to Christ for Freedom: Trust in Christ's death and resurrection as the only way to be freed from the law's condemnation and the power of sin. Through faith in Him, you can experience true freedom and new life.
- 3) Experience Transformation: Accept Christ's offer of salvation and allow the Holy Spirit to transform your life, enabling you to bear fruit for God and live in the newness of the Spirit.

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) Free from the law to live in the Spirit

- a) 1) Bound for life (Romans 7:1)
- 2) Released by death (Romans 7:2-3)
- 3) Alive in Christ (Romans 7:4-6)

Pray

Read

¹ Or don't you know brothers and sisters, Since I am speaking to those who know *the law*, that the law rules over someone as long as he lives?

² For example, a married woman is legally bound to her husband while he is living. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law regarding the husband. ³

So then, if she is married to another man while her husband is living, she will be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law. Though she is married to another man, she is not an adulteress.

⁴ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you also were put to death in relation to the law through the body of Christ so that you may belong to another. You belong to him who was raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions aroused through the law were working in us to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we have been released from the law, since we have died to what held us, so that we serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the old letter of the law.

Introduction

- Picture the last time you went to a wedding. See the bride and the groom at the front of the chapel. Holding hands. Looking into each other's eyes. Saying their vows. *Till death us do part.*
- Death ends marriage. In **Romans 7:1-6**, death ends our relation to the law. Death allows us to belong to Christ. And when we belong to Jesus we get the Spirit, who enables us to bear fruit for God's glory. 🕒

Argument

- Here's the big picture this morning. You're dead to the law and alive in Christ—so live a Spirit-enabled, fruitful life!

Arrangement

1. Bound for life (**Romans 7:1**)
2. Released by death (**Romans 7:2-3**)
3. Alive in Christ (**Romans 7:4-6**)

1. Bound for life (Romans 7:1)

¹ Or don't you know brothers and sisters,

- English translations don't always get it right. I choose to preach from the Christian Standard Bible. On **Romans 7:1** the Christian Standard Bible gets the word order wrong. The sentence should read, Or don't you know brothers and sisters, since I am speaking to those who know the law, that the law rules over someone as long as he lives. It reads, Since I am speaking to those who know the law, brothers and sisters, don't you know that the law rules over someone as long as he lives. **What is the difference?** The first word in the sentence should be Or. Or begins the sentence in the Greek. Or joins this sentence to **Romans 6:14**, For sin will not rule over you, because you are not under the law but under grace. Paul is returning to the idea that you are no longer bound to the law but bound to grace.
- Paul is wondering if his readers have forgotten what it was like to be bound the law.

Since I am speaking to those who know *the law*,

- Paul acknowledges his audience. He is writing to those who know *the law*. Both Jewish believers and Gentile converts make up the church in Rome. **Does the law save you? Does the law make you holy?** These questions created friction between Jew and Gentile in the church. Paul addresses Jewish believers in this passage.

that *the law* rules over someone as long as he *lives*?

- Paul's audience understand the law. They perceive the law. **What law?** • The law given by Moses. • The law summarised in the 10 Commandments. • The law which came with blessings if you kept it, and curses if you didn't. • The law, which according to **James 2:10**, must be kept entirely. • The law which if you stumble at one point, you are guilty of breaking it all. • The law which demands perfect obedience. Perfect submission. All the time. All your life.

Summation

- Paul is asking those who have lived under the law, **do you remember the law's harsh rule? Do you remember your bondage to that law? Do you remember how your bondage was all consuming? Do you remember how your bondage was for life?** 🕒

Transition

- Being bound to the law for life creates an unsolvable problem. The law demands perfect obedience. Yet we fall short. **How can we be freed from the demands of the law? How can we enter a new relationship with Jesus?**

2. Released by death (Romans 7:2-3)

² For example,

- Paul's going to explain how to break the bondage to the law. And he is going to do so by using an illustration from everyday life. Marriage.

a married woman is legally bound to her husband while he is living. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law regarding the husband.

I got married on the 14th of October 2000. Impressed I remembered the date? I looked it up. On Facebook. Last night. While I don't remember the date, I do remember the day. Liezl arrived at the church 25 minutes late. I was sweating bullets. A bundle of nerves. But when she walked down the aisle she was the most beautiful woman I've ever seen. Radiant. Hair done up. Dress all sewn up with sequins. That's my queen. As we stood before God and witnesses we held hands. We looked into each other's eyes. We said our vows. *I Mark Penrith take you Liezl Penrith to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy law.*

- *Till death us do part.* Ever wonder why we say that? 🕒 In Ruth 1 and 1 Timothy 5, widows are to remarry after their spouse dies. Why? Because death ends marriage and young vulnerable widows need husbands. In Matthew 22:30, Jesus states there is no marriage in the resurrection. Why? Because death ends marriage in this life, and the next.
- Paul is using an illustration from everyday life. Marriage. A married woman is legally bound to her husband while he is living. Bound is a perfect tense verb, meaning she is bound and remains bound. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law regarding the husband. Released is a perfect tense verb, meaning she is permanently set free from her bound state.

³ So then, if she is married to another man while her husband is living, she will be called an adulteress.

- God is the author of marriage. It is His idea. In Genesis 2:7 we read that the Lord God formed the man out of the dust from the ground and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being. Adam. But something was off. In Genesis 2:18 we read that the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him." Verse 21, So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to come over the man, and he slept. God took one of his ribs and closed the flesh at that place.
- Which brings us to the first wedding in Scripture. Adam is the groom. Eve is the bride. And God Himself is the pastor. Then the Lord God made the rib he had taken from the man into a woman and brought her to the man. And the man said: Wow wee! She's

awesome (that's my own paraphrase). I mean, This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called “wo-man,” for she was taken from man.

- **Verse 24**, This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh. One flesh. God's intent for marriage. One natural man, and one natural woman, for life. That's why when we say, I do, we promise to *forsake all others*. That's why if she is married to another man while her husband is living, she will be called an adulteress.
- Keep in mind, Paul is writing to those who know the law. And he is illustrating an understanding of marriage derived from the law. His readers would understand that marriage is a covenant commitment. That marriage is for life. That marriage should not be entered into lightly.

But if her husband **dies**, she is free from that **law**. Though she is married to another man, she is not an adulteress.

- **But if** her husband **dies**, she is free from that **law**. And because she is free from that law, though she is married to another man, she is not an adulteress.

Summation

- Just like marriage is for life, so too, bondage to the law is for life, it can only be broken by death. 🕒

Transition

- **How can we be freed from the demands of the law? How can we enter a new relationship with Jesus?** Death. Death paves the way for a new life. But which of the two parties of this marriage dies? The law? Or you? 🕒

3. Alive in Christ (Romans 7:4-6)

⁴ Therefore, my brothers and sisters,

- **Therefore**. Here comes the application.

you **also** were put to **death** in relation to **the law** through **the body of Christ** so that you **may belong** to another.

- We were bound by the law. It's as if we were married to the law. A law that persecuted us. A law that punished us. A real pickle. **How might we escape?**
- Death. Either the law must die. Or we must die. I don't want to spoil next week's sermon, but the law was never going to die. The law is good. And the law is perfect. And so, if we are to be free, we must die.
- Paul's already told us that in **Romans 6:3**. Or are you unaware that all of us who were [immersed] into Christ Jesus were [immersed] into his death? **We died. Spiritually. With Jesus.** At the moment of salvation we died to sin. And we **were put to death** in relation to **the law**. And so now, because we're not married to the law any longer we can **belong** to another.

You belong to him who was raised from the dead in order that we may **bear fruit** for God.

- **Who do we belong to?** You belong to him who was raised from the dead. **Who was raised from the dead?** Jesus! We belong to Jesus. **Does your heart leap?** 🕒
- Let me tell you about the proudest moment of my life. The day Liezl and I got married we had a reception in a hall of a hotel. After the celebrations were over Liezl and I headed over to the reception of the hotel to check in. The lady behind the desk asked, *Under who's name?* My heart exploded. I had to fight back tears. OK, I shed a tear. Mr and Mrs Penrith. **Why the emotional moment?** Because I introduced my queen as Mrs Penrith. I introduced her new identity. 🕒 She no belonged to her father's family. She was now mine.
- We belong to another. Our identity has changed. We are now in Christ. And belonging to Jesus changes everything. • Our identity has been made new in Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). • We have been created for good works in Christ (**Ephesians 2:10**). • There is now no condemnation for us in Christ (**Romans 8:1-2**). • We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ (**Ephesians 1:3**). • We are righteous in Christ (**Philippians 3:9**).
- **Why has God changed your identity?** In order that we may bear fruit. In order that we may bear fruitful attitudes and fruitful actions. Fruitful attitudes include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (**Galatians 5:22**). Fruitful actions would be the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God (**Philippians 1:11**).

⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions aroused through the law were working in us to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we have been released from the law, since we have died to what held us, so that we serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the old letter of the law.

- There was a time when we were married to the law. Which produced fleshly carnality. Stoked the sin in our heart because it was unable to save our soul. Which produced fruit unto death.
- But we've been released by Christ, and now have an identity in Christ. But not only that, we have the Spirit of the living God in us. The Holy Spirit empowers us. The Holy Spirit of God by Who's power the world came into being (Genesis 1:1-2, Job 26:13) was promised to us as a permanent guide, teacher, seal of salvation, and comforter (John 14:16-18). To live in the newness of the Spirit is to live in the power of the One who raised Christ from the dead. It is not external conformity to rules but internal transformation. The law could command righteousness, but it could not create righteousness. The Spirit does both. The Spirit cultivates godly affections. Love where there was once selfishness. Peace where there was once strife. Holiness where there was once rebellion. This is no passive change. It is a Spirit-driven, Christ-exalting, life-altering reality that manifests itself in fruitfulness. Serving in the newness of the Spirit means we no longer labor in our own strength but by His power. Living in the Spirit is not optional for the believer. It is the only way we can bear fruit. The only way we can serve. The only way we can truly live.

Summation

- You died to the letter of the law and are alive in Christ, so that you may live a Spirit-enabled, fruitful life! 🕒

Believers, how ought you to live?

1. **Embrace Your Freedom in Christ.** You are no longer bound by the law but are free to live in newness of the Spirit. Your identity transforms your daily walk with God. This week reflect on areas of your life where you still feel bound by guilt, shame, or legalistic thinking. Remind yourself that in Christ, you are free.
2. **Bear Fruit for God.** Actively seek to live a life that bears spiritual fruit as evidence of your union with Christ. This includes both attitudes like love, joy, peace. And actions like serving others, sharing the gospel, living righteously. Identify an area where you want to grow. And then ask God to bring forth fruit for your good and His glory.
3. **Serve in the Spirit.** Shift your focus from religious legalism to serving God in the power of the Spirit. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your actions, decisions, and relationships. Spend time in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to empower you to live a life that glorifies God. Be intentional about relying on His strength rather than your own.

Unbelievers, how ought you to respond?

1. **Recognize Your Bondage to Sin.** Understand that without Christ, you are bound by sin and the law, which leads to death. Acknowledge your need for a Savior who can free you from this bondage. Reflect on the ways sin has impacted your life and relationships. Consider the consequences of living apart from God's grace and truth.
2. **Turn to Christ for Freedom.** Trust in Christ's death and resurrection as the only way to be freed from the law's condemnation and the power of sin. If you haven't already, take a step of faith by acknowledging Jesus as your Lord and Saviour. Acknowledge your sin. Believe in His sacrifice. Commit to following Him.
3. **Experience Transformation.** Allow the Holy Spirit to transform your life. Begin reading your Bible. Begin praying. Get connected to our church. Get equipped in a small group Bible study. Get involved in a ministry. Glory God and enjoy Him forever.

Conclusion

- Picture the last time you went to a wedding. See the bride and the groom at the front of the chapel. Holding hands. Looking into each other's eyes. Saying their vows. *Till death us do part.*
- Death ends marriage. In **Romans 7:1-6**, death ends our relation to the law. Death allows us to belong to Christ. And when we belong to Jesus we get the Spirit, who enables us to bear fruit for God's glory.

Arrangement

1. Bound for life (**Romans 7:1**)
2. Released by death (**Romans 7:2-3**)
3. Alive in Christ (**Romans 7:4-6**)

Argument

- The big picture this morning was, You're dead to the law and alive in Christ—so go out and live a Spirit-enabled, fruitful life! 🕒

Benediction

- **Romans 15:13**, Now may the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace as we believe so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.