

## Romans 7:1-6—A First Look at the Law

### I. Introduction to the Law

- A. Paul's first serious look at the law in Romans
  - 1. Quickly considered in chapters 2-5
  - 2. Romans 6:14-15 is the last previous reference.
- B. Continuation of Paul's thought from chapter 6
  - 1. Two dominions
    - a. Old dominion
    - b. New dominion
  - 2. Moving from the Old to the New Dominion
    - a. Romans 6:3-4
      - i. Christ's dying and rising
      - ii. Our dying and rising in Christ through our:
        - Profession of faith
        - Confirmed in our baptism
    - b. Objective means of changing dominions
    - c. Subjective means of changing dominions
  - 3. *Have we left the old dominion for the new one?*

### II. Moving to Chapter 7 and the Law

- A. Introducing the law
  - 1. The law is . . . ?
  - 2. How does the law apply? In the old dominion?  
In the new dominion?
  - 3. Three major options
    - a. Law still is in full force.
    - b. Law is obsolete and irrelevant.
    - c. Law is modified to serve a new purpose.
- B. Romans 7:1-3—A principle and its illustration
  - 1. Romans 7:1—The principle: *The law is binding, authoritative, and in force for the living.*
  - 2. Romans 7:2-3—The illustration from marriage/death
- C. Romans 7:4-6—The principle applied and explained
  - 1. Romans 7:4—Applied
    - a. From the law when we were subject to the old

- dominion . . . through “death” . . .
- b. To the new dominion under Jesus Christ.
- 2. Romans 7:5-6—Explained
  - a. Verse 5—Old dominion
    - i. Relationship of the law and the sinful nature
    - ii. Fruit for death
    - iii. *Good works measured by the law => attempting to establish righteousness => God's acceptance*
  - b. Verse 6—To the new dominion
    - i. Released from the measure of the law by its written code/letter
    - ii. Released to the serve in the new way of Spirit
    - iii. *God's gracious acceptance => righteousness established in Christ => fruit for God via Spirit*
- D. The Purpose of our transfer from the old to the new dominion: To bear fruit for God (v. 4) by serving in the new way of the Spirit (v. 6)
  - 1. The Spirit—more fully addressed in chapter 8
  - 2. Fruitfulness

### III. Theological and Personal Application

- A. Chart with x and y axes
  - 1. X axis is “spirit.”
  - 2. Y axis is “law.”
- B. Divide into 4 quadrants
  - 1. Quadrant 1—No spirit, no law as the world of anarchy
  - 2. Quadrant 2—All spirit, no law as the world of antinomianism that tends to reject biblical authority
  - 3. Quadrant 3—All law, no spirit
    - a. In the old dominion, works righteousness
    - b. In the new dominion, legalism that creeps back under the old dominion of works righteousness.
  - 4. Quadrant 4—The Spirit and the law in the new dominion
    - a. Christ and the Spirit fulfill the demand of the law.
    - b. Keeping the law as a guide to thankfulness and fruitfulness

### **Romans 6:3-4 (NIV)**

<sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

### **Romans 7:1-6 (NIV)**

RO 7:1 Do you not know, brothers--for I am speaking to men who know the law--that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? <sup>2</sup> For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. <sup>3</sup> So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

RO 7:4 So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. <sup>5</sup> For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. <sup>6</sup> But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. (NIV)

### **Romans 6:3-4 (ESV)**

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

### **Romans 7:1-6 (ESV)**

**7** Or do you not know, brothers<sup>[a]</sup>—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? <sup>2</sup>For 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.<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>3</sup>Accordingly, 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.

<sup>4</sup>Likewise, 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. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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.<sup>[c]</sup>

### **Footnotes:**

- a. **Romans 7:1** Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 4
- b. **Romans 7:2** Greek *law concerning the husband*
- c. **Romans 7:6** Greek *of the letter*