

THE LAW AND THE BELIEVER (Romans 7:1 -6)

INTRODUCTION In looking at Romans 6-8, we see that Chapter 6 deals with principles in living a holy life, Chapter 7 with problems in living a holy life, and Chapter 8 with the power for living a holy life. Chapters 6 and 7 form a parenthesis between Rom. 5:21 and Rom. 8:1.

Chapter 7 deals with three important relationships. (1) Between the law and the Christian (v.1 – 6); (2) Between the law and sin (v.7 – 13); and, (3) Between the Christian and sin (v.14 – 25). Understanding Chapter 7 rests upon Chapter 6 where Paul asserts (v.14) that sin shall not be our master – why – because we “are not under law, but under grace”. We will find that victory in living a holy life reduces to a choice - that of yielding to a new Master, Jesus Christ. In Matt 6:24, Jesus was emphatic, we cannot serve two masters for we will, “either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other”. It is not possible to live with a foot in two camps.

THE PRINCIPLE STATED (v.1).

The law only has authority over people who are alive. If I'm alive, I can't opt out of the law, but if I'm dead I'm no longer bound by it - I can't be sued, held in bondage or jailed. We note three things about this verse:

It is addressed to the church as a whole, not just Jewish believers.

In this context, for the Jew, “the law” should be understood as the full content of the Mosaic Law with all its rites and regulations. For the gentile, it is the indwelling moral law of God (c.f., Ch.2)

The Greek construction clearly links this passage back to Paul's earlier assertion in Ch. 6:14.

THE PRINCIPLE ILLUSTRATED (vs 2,3)

Paul now moves from the general to the specific, using the example of marriage as an illustration. He highlights four points, all of which are relevant to the relationship between the believer and the law.

A married woman is bound to her husband, being under his authority and power, only as long as he is alive – his death frees her completely.

The relationship between husband and wife is binding for as long as both are alive. The death of the husband frees the wife from all obligations.

If she marries another man while he is still alive, she suffers from the stigma of adultery. If she marries after his death, there is no such stigma. Following the death of the husband, the wife is free to enter into a new relationship.

A primary outcome of the husband/wife relationship is children, i.e., to be fruitful and multiply.

THE PRINCIPLE APPLIED (v.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”.

This great doctrine rests upon the reality given in Gal 2:20 where Paul says, “I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me”. In choosing to be bound to Christ, I have chosen to allow self, with all its moral corruption, to die. As surely as Jesus went to the cross, I went with him. In so doing, I died to the law and became free from its authority, power and obligations. Even better, as surely as he was raised from the dead and lives, so he lives within me (I have a new relationship), that I might bear fruit for God.

Gal.4: 4,5 gives further insight. Christ placed himself under the authority of the law, meeting all its demands. Then he died on the cross, taking the punishment the law requires be paid for sin. Despite the fact that the law did all that it could, he still rose from the dead! What do we conclude? For anyone who is “in Christ” the demands of the law have been fully met and its power is finished. The law exacted its full demands upon Christ, there is nothing left to exact upon you and me. The Christian who remains afraid of the demands of the law is rather like the wife who remains afraid of her dead husband!

What else does Rom.6:4 tell us?

The Christian has a new life – not a modified life, but a new life.

The Christian has a new relationship – we have a new master – we belong to someone else.

The Christian has a new purpose, “to bear fruit to God”.

The Christian has a new power and ability – all that is needed to bear fruit.

If you are new or visiting; a special warm welcome to you. We trust you enjoy your time with us.

Today we will be having communion. If it is your practice to participate in this we welcome you to join with us in celebrating the Lord's Supper. If this is not your custom or if you are unsure of what to do please just pass the emblems (bread and wine) to the person next to you.

This Morning

Speaker John Hannah

This Evening

- JCF 5.00pm
- Creation Series 7.00pm

Next Sunday

17th May. Nick Brennan

Thursday Kidz Club

6:30 - 8:00 pm

7 - 12 year olds

Ph: Allan Maguire - 4767197

Youth Group - Saturday 16th

Combined Tea - Henley

Speaker: Lew Myer

Meet at Wray Street - 6pm

Hymn Singing Group

Saturday 16th May at 2pm. Meet at Cornerstone, All Saints Hall.

Prayer Items

Murray & Ruth, UK, would like prayer as they leave to go to Israel for two weeks (9-23 May) They will be helping with tw back-to-back courses. It is a full schedule starting at 7.30am finishing at 9pm the followed by leadership team meeting after that each night. There will be 1 Israel-based participants who are involved in significant ministries in Israel.

Richard & Nancye, USA, write:

A new lady, recently baptized, has a 1 year old daughter who made an attempt to take her life last week. Pray for the recovery of the teenager and for wisdom in the family to help her and for us as we share the love of Christ and give counsel.

Please pray for Nancye's Mum (90) who is in hospital with fluid on the lungs.

THE PRINCIPLE AMPLIFIED (V.5,6)

In these verses, Paul contrasts our old condition (v.5) with our new condition (v.6). In so doing, he gives us the foundation from which we can understand the remainder of this chapter.

v.5 Prior to knowing Jesus Christ I was, "controlled by the sinful nature". I was in a state of moral corruption. This sin nature, when mixed with God's moral law, formed a lethal combination. It provoked wrong thoughts, which in turn lead to wrong actions. The consequence = death.

v.6 "By dying to what once bound us [the law], we have been released from the law [with all its demands]". For what purpose: to "serve in the new way of the Spirit". Liberty does not become license. We have been freed from one master (the law), offering only death, and called to serve a new Master (Jesus Christ) who not only offers life but also a new power and a new presence.!

SUMMARY

Before I met Jesus, my legal standing before God, was on the basis of my adherence to His moral law. Not only did I fail to meet its standards, but I became entrapped and frustrated as I fell hopelessly short of its demands. Indeed, in the very act of trying to meet its demands, it provoked wrong actions and I became subject to its penalty. Thus, the very thing that was meant to give life, became death to me.

By surrendering my life to Jesus, by yielding to Him, by allowing Him to become my new Master, not only am I free from my old master (the law) and the sin which it provokes, but I enter into the power of his resurrection. From a legal perspective, my standing before God is on the basis of the life of Jesus – perfect, flawless, without fault. I gain a new life, a new relationship, a new purpose and a new power.

Small Groups

Tuesday

- Ladies Home Group - see Laura Hannah 473-7954
- Central Home Group - see Steve Clark 479-2070
- Brockville Home Group - see Geoffrey Stewart 476-7888

Thursday

- JCF Home Group - see Gideon Chang 488-2118
- Town Home Group - see Dave Smeaton 453 0569

Friday

- Friday morning Home Group - see Bethney Stewart 476-7888

Prayer Groups

Wednesday

- Men's prayer group meeting at Dan and Stephs from 6:30am till around 8am.

Thursday

- All Saints main church building from 5:15pm

Sunday

- All Saints Hall from 9.00am

Living the Life of Faith

Come and hear **Barbara Barker** and **Denise Hamilton**, from the USA, speak about Living Lives of Faith.

Barbara is a pastor's wife, popular Bible teacher and speaker, and author. Denise has co-authored and written a number of Christian books.

All women are warmly invited to hear Barbara and Denise speaking in Dunedin.

Further Dunedin information available from:

Ruth Peoples 473 9386 or email peoples@orcon.net.nz, Jan Jopson 489 7361 or email jjopson@ihug.co.nz

Friday 22 May 7pm @ Glenleith Bowling Club Coffee, Dessert and Discussion

Saturday 23 May 9am-4pm Glenleith Bowling Club, Day of talks and discussion, lunch provided. No charge—donations appreciated.

Registration to Jan Jopson **due now**.

NOTICES

- Crèche Roster
10th May Margaret Coyle, Georgie Urquhart
17th May Vicki Halford, Jen Pettigrew
- Brochures and registration forms for the Queens birthday Weekend camp at Lakeland Park Christian camp are now available see notice board and the table (shelf) at front of hall.
- International Food Night Sat 23 May 6.30 pm at Caversham Baptist Church. Tickets: Family \$25.00, Adult \$12.00, Child under 13 yrs \$6.00 - proceeds to the Bible Society in New Zealand. Poster on notice board.
- Christian Resource Centre International 'News' magazine - see notice board and front table.
- **Share your faith the way Jesus did. "Way of the Master" free evangelism training course.**
Saturday May 9th & 23rd
8:30am - 12:30pm
Morning tea provided
Cornerstone Church Hall
Contact Quentin 0273 222 233 qdatsun@gmail.com

Any notices for the church newsletter should be sent to Ron Jack at ron@sclsolutions.com or call 467-2024
before Thursday night!