"FREE FROM THE LAW"

Romans 7:1-6
2-2-2020

INTRODUCTION:

***Christ set us free from the bondage of the Law (Legalism).**
What does this mean?

Freedom from the Law means 3 new realities that every believer should experience:

Being free from the Law means we have:

I. A NEW MARRIAGE TO HONOR (v. 1-4a)
(A contrast of Husbands - Law or Christ)

A. The New Marriage Illustrated (v. 1-3)

B. The New Marriage Applied (v. 4a)

Being free from the Law means we have:

II. A NEW FRUIT TO BEAR (v. 4b-5)
(A Contrast of Fruits - To God or Death)

Being free from the Law means we have:

III. A NEW POWER TO SERVE BY (v. 6)
(A Contrast of Service - Spirit or Letter)

Freedom from the Law means 3 new realities that every believer should experience:

1. The believer is married to Christ, not a Law-code
2. The believer bears fruit for God, not death

3. The believer serves by the power of the Spirit, not the flesh

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HRM – 1-13-2024

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INTRODUCTION:

Have you ever been frustrated as a Christian because you were not what you desired to be?

You desired to fulfill all the standards, rules, commands, etc., that God has in His Word, but found that you often lacked the motivation and ability to do so.

Maybe the reason for this is that we were missing something internally. The power just was not there!

Paul in Romans 7 is going to show us where the power for victorious Christian living is to be found. It's not by the power of the Law, but by the power of the living Christ.

What should come first, obedience or spirituality? Doing right (outside) or being right (inside)?

Answer: Spirituality and being.

Question: How is one made spiritual?

Whereas in chapters 3 - 5, God revealed that salvation does not come from the Law (works), in chapters 6 - 8 He unveils that sanctification does not come from the Law (works).

The word "Law" is mentioned 23 times in chapter 7 alone!

Just as we were dependent exclusively upon God for salvation (cp. 4:3); we are dependent exclusively upon God for sanctification (cp. 7:25).

Just as we tell no man "Do this work to be saved"; we tell no man "Do this work to be spiritual."

Works may reveal spirituality, but they do no produce spirituality.

Paul in chapters 6 and 7 deals with the two extremes which those who are saved by grace often succumb to: 1) license (chap. 6)
2) legalism (chap. 7)

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Being free from the Law means we have:

I. A NEW MARRIAGE TO HONOR (v. 1-4a)

(A contrast of Husbands - Law or Christ)

A. The New Marriage Illustrated (v. 1-3)

V. 1

"Dominion" = ruling authority or lordship

ILLUS: No law is imposed upon a dead man. No one demands that a dead man pay his taxes, fines, etc. No one legislates laws for a corpse to abide by.

V. 2

"For" = in context has the idea of "for example" or "for sake of illustration."

Though Paul's main point in context is not to prove the permanence of marriage [but to give an illustration of the believer's freedom from the Law], he does prove the permanence of wedlock by means of the illustration he gives.

"Hath an husband" = lit. "under a husband" (pointing to marriage and specifically the headship of the husband and the submissiveness of the wife in such a relationship)

"Is bound" = has been bound and still is (perfect, passive).

Marriage is a permanent bond. That is why it is called "wedlock." The problem today is that many are "manufacturing keys" to unlock that which is to be kept locked and secured.

"Bound by the Law" = It is God's Law (established before the Mosaic Law) that binds two (male and female) into one (Gen. 2:24).

NOTE: God says: "We are bound to our spouse by Law; He does not say "by love." "Falling out of love" is not a justifiable reason for divorce.

"If the husband be dead" = if the husband should happen to be die (by means of a natural course of events, not by the wife killing him off!!!).

"Loosed" = annulled, nullified, or discharged; away from the obligation of God's Law of matrimony.

The only way out of marriage is death! It is "till death do we part" Marriage is for keeps!

V. 3

Paul is alluding to Christ's statement found in Mark 10:11, 12 - "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

"Adultery" = an unlawful union or joining together of two people wherein at least one party belongs or formerly belonged exclusively to someone else.

--The Bible speaks of <u>spiritual</u> adultery (James 4:4 - in which the believer becomes a companion with the world system - cp. Rev. 2:22).

--The Bible speaks of <u>sexual</u> adultery (I Cor. 6:9, Heb. 13:4 - where someone has a sexual relationship with the spouse of another).

--The Bible speaks of <u>marital</u> adultery (Mt. 5:32, 19:9; Mk. 10:11, 12; Lk. 16:18 -- where divorce and remarriage occurs.

Why is divorce wrong? It is <u>contrary to God's original design</u> (Mt. 19:1-9).

B. The New Marriage <u>Applied</u> (v. 4a)

"Become dead" - were put to death (passive). It is <u>God</u> who applied Christ's death to our account (Rom. 6:2-5).

"Dead to the Law" = dead <u>in relationship</u> to the Law.

NOTE: Paul did not say that the Law died (which would have been the most natural analogy in this passage's context), but that the believer died in relationship to the Law.

"By the body of Christ" = by means of Christ's body. Our relationship to the Old Testament Law ended when Christ's body died on the cross (the rent veil in the Temple is a reminder of this - Mt. 27:51).

Just as marriage involves certain obligations, and death frees you from those obligations, so the Law involved certain obligations, and death ("in Christ") freed you from those obligations.

Today we do not offer sacrifices nor fulfill the details of the Jewish ceremonial and civil Law; but Christ has freed us from the O.T. Law's authority over us.

"Married to another" - (Gk "hetero" - "Another" v. 3) - a different one; another of a different kind. Christ is contrasted with Law. He is superior in all aspects to the Law.

Believers have been married to Christ as their Husband (I Cor. 6:13; Gal. 4:26; Eph. 5:22-33).

Many Christians who are not in bondage for salvation remain in bondage for sanctification and service, struggling in a hard, legal way to please God (Rom. 8:8), instead of finding the source and spring of joyous service in union with Christ (G. Thomas, p.182).

This is not saying that we should not be concerned about God's commands (that apply to us today); indeed we must be. Rather, it is saying that we should be concerned first and foremost with our relationship to Him, and keeping His commands will take care of themselves!

Did not Jesus say that we could fulfill the whole Law if we sincerely and absolutely loved God and our neighbor?
[SEE Mt. 22:34-40;
Rom. 13:8-10;
Gal. 5:13, 14;
Cp. Mt. 7:12; Ja. 2:8]

ILLUS: of a husband who has a list of rules and duties for his wife to do ("Do this...Do that...Don't do this...Don't do that..."). If she is a good wife, she will truly desire to fulfill that list, but may find that she cannot always do it. She may miss the wishes of her husband because her attention is drawn to the list. Eventually it may come to a point where she resents that list. What she needed was simply one rule: "Love your husband." And if she did, she would gladly do that which was in his best interest.

It's not legalistic Law, but Christ Himself who is:

- The incentive to deny self
- The power to deny sin
- The measure of our responsibilities

- The source of our fruitfulness

A Christian does not serve a Lawbook, but a Lord; not a host of rules, but a Heavenly Father; not a list of standards but a loving Savior.

Being free from the Law means we have:

II. A NEW FRUIT TO BEAR (v. 4b-5)

(A Contrast of Fruits - To God or Death)

V. 4b

Why is a believer married to Christ? What is the purpose for which you were joined to Christ?

Answer: "That we should bring forth fruit unto God!" We are joined to Christ to bring forth fruit!

(SEE Jn. 15:1-5, 8; Heb. 6:7; Eph. 2:10)

"Fruit" - not only involves our conduct but our character (EX: Fruit of the Spirit - Gal. 5:22).

Fruitfulness comes when we are more concerned about being close to Christ than on keeping ourselves in perfection by our own strength.

V. 5

As Paul showed sin's fruit and service in 5:21, 23, he now shows the Law's fruit and service in 7:4b-6.

"Flesh" is not referring to our physical skin and bones, but to the old nature that is housed within our skin and bones.

"Motions" = lit. passions; lusts and desires that moved us into action to satisfy them.

"By the Law" -

The Law stirred up (instigated) our sin nature.
The Law aggravated our rebelliousness.
The Law brought out our anti-God-ness.

ILLUS: How a child (or adult) will be tempted to do something just because it is forbidden.

If there were no prohibition, attention would not be drawn to certain things to the magnitude that it is once it is forbidden.

Man, being totally depraved and rebellious, by nature does things often for no other purpose than to defy God and His standards. There is something appealing to carnal man about those things which are outlawed.

EX: "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Prov. 9:17).

Man's sin nature is drawn by the apparent attractiveness of that which is forbidden (EX: Eve, who even before acquiring a sin nature was attracted to that which God forbade, thinking perhaps that God was keeping something from her that was beneficial to her (Gen. 3:5,6).

Often called; "The forbidden fruit syndrome."

In a sense, the Law incites us to sin, then condemns us when we sin . . . The Law is a no-win situation for the sinner. (Schnaiter, Biblical Viewpoint, Romans, BJU, p. 40)

If the Law sparks man's rebelliousness, should we do away with Law? (EX: Many think about legalizing drugs or relinquishing the discipline of children).

Answer: NO! Law is good because it shows man his sinfulness, depravity, and desperate need for God - Rom. 7:7-12.

"We are no longer bound to fruitless attempts to please God in the flesh through legalistic ritual, which can only produce frustration through life and eventuate in death" (Schnaiter, p. 40).

Being free from the Law means we have:

III. A NEW <u>POWER</u> TO SERVE BY (v. 6)

(A Contrast of <u>Service</u> - Spirit or Letter)

"But <u>now</u> . . ."

NOTE Contrast:
<u>Dominion</u> of the Law (v. 1)
<u>Deliverance</u> from the Law (v. 6)

"Being dead wherein we were held" = having died in relationship to that which held us tight and wouldn't let go (namely the Law), we are now free to serve God in a new way!

Being bound by the Law is like being married to a perfect husband who demands perfection, but never offers a hand for you to attain it (The Law offered no power over sin - 6:14).

Paul, in demonstrating the superiority of the New Covenant ("in Christ") over the Old Covenant ("through Moses"), says: "The letter [Law] killeth, but the Spirit [Holy Spirit] giveth life" (II Cor. 3:6).

He goes on to say: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (v. 17).

The motivation and dynamic of our lives does not come from the Law, but from the Spirit (SEE Wiersbe, p. 535).

The Holy Spirit motivates (energizes) us and enables us to serve Christ, as we draw close to our Lord.

Just as we "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), we also <u>SERVE</u> "in newness of Spirit."

CONCLUSION:

Freedom from the Law means 3 new realities that every believer should experience:

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